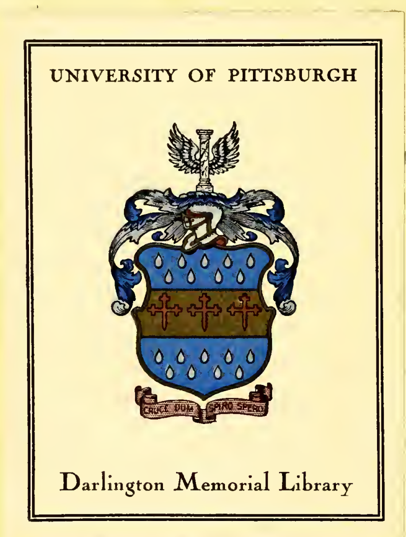



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LADY HESTER STANHOPE'S ARRIVAL AT PALMYRA.

London Henry Colburn, Gᵗ Marlborough Sᵗ 1846

TRAVELS

OF

LADY HESTER STANHOPE;

FORMING THE COMPLETION

OF

HER MEMOIRS.

NARRATED BY

HER PHYSICIAN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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TRAVELS

OF

LADY HESTER STANHOPE.

Τὴν 'Ασίην δὴ πλεῖστον διαφέρειν φημὶ της Ευρώπῆς 'ες τὰς φύσιας τῶν ξύμπαντων, τῶν τὲ ἐκ τῆς γῆς φυομένων και τῶν ἄνθρωπων· πουλὺ γαρ καλλιόνα κὰι μεἰζόνα πάντα γίγνεται ἐν τῃ 'Ασίῃ. 'Ητὲ χώρη τῆς χώρῆς ἡμερωτέρη κὰι τὰ ἤθεα τῶν ἄνθρῶπων ἠπιωτέρα κὰι ἐνεργοτέρα. [Hippocr. 72 ¶, cap. 5. *Περὶ ἀερῶν, ὑδατῷν κὰι τοπῶν.*]

CHAPTER I.

Damascus—Ramazán—Visit to the Jews—House of the Hayms, brothers of him of Acre—Visit to the Pasha—Compliment of Hadj Mohammed to Lady Hester—Curiosity of the women to see her Ladyship—Their dress—Inefficacy of personal restraints upon women — Fanaticism of the inhabitants of Damascus — Lepers — Amusements of Ramazán——Patients attended by the Author — Sulymán Bey — His malady—His cure—Rural fête—Sister of Ahmed Bey——Chief families in Damascus — Visits to the sick — The Merge, or place of amusement—Women at prayer.

Damascus is a city of the highest antiquity, and is repeatedly spoken of in the Holy Scriptures. In the

time of the Syro-Macedonian dynasties, and of the Romans, it was the capital of Cœle-Syria. Under the Saracen Caliphs, it was the residence of the Ommiades, beginning forty years after the death of the Prophet; and it is still the second, if not the principal city of Syria, and the capital of a pashalik.

Its name, among the natives, is El Sham, and Demeshk el Sham, demeshk being the word from which we derive Damascus, the signification of which I do not know, and el Sham (to the left) being the name of the province, as Yemen (the right hand) is the name of another facing it. Ali bey, p. 265, makes its population to amount to 400,000 souls, which is probably too much by half; and we have a right to doubt his accuracy, since the shortness of his stay (only seven days) must have rendered it impossible for him to obtain accurate estimates. He reckons 20,000 Catholics, 5,000 Greek schismatics, and 1,000 Jews. Damascus has many noble mosques and fine public edifices. Of the mosques we entered none; yet a person could, as he sat in the Melon coffee-house, look into the court of the principal one, of which Abulfeda seems to speak, p. 172, saying that it was built by Walyd, son of Abd el Malek, and was called Beny Omyah: although it has not externally any appearances of Saracen architecture. Ali bey, in his character of a Mahometan, entered it, and he describes the mosque as having "three naves

of forty-four columns, each nave being four hundred feet long: and in the middle of the central nave four enormous pillars, supporting a large stone cupola." He adds that, the mosque stands in a large court, surrounded with arcades, supported by square pillars, over which are galleries, and that in the mosque is the sepulchre of John the Baptist, whose head, as well as that of Hoseyn ebn Ali, was exposed here. In the suburbs there is a mosque of dervises remarkable for numerous cupolas. It is said to have as many as a dozen schools in it, supported by large revenues, arising from endowments and contributions. I regret not to have taken drawings of the ironwork of the windows of the ancient mosques, which, from the taste and delicacy of their forms, were well worth the trouble.

Of the khans, that which is called Khan Harûn is the most remarkable. It is built in layers of black and white stone, like a chess-board; and within are commodious magazines for the merchants.

The patriarch of the Greek Church, a prelate superior in rank, although not in power and influence to the archbishop of Constantinople, resided here. His title is patriarch of Antioch. He had under him forty-two archbishops and bishops.

Damascus owes half of its pleasantness to the fountains which abound in every part of the city, and in almost every house. These fountains are supplied by running streams, which traverse the city,

and which are branches of a small river, called the Barada.[1]

Although the house assigned to Lady Hester Stanhope was a good one, she had probably determined to find it bad, in order to shift to a better quarter of the city ; for it is customary, in Turkish cities, to lodge Europeans, of what rank soever they may be, among the Christians ; as their habits of life and their religious observances are more easily followed there than among the Turks, who, in their own quarter, would suffer with impatience any violation of their own notions of decency or religion, which Europeans, without intending it, are constantly committing. So it is, that the Mahometans look on the Christian quarter in the most contemptuous light, never going thither but when called to it by urgent business.

Lady Hester knew all this ; and was determined, by a strong measure, at once to give herself a title to consequence beyond any other European who had before visited Damascus. Accordingly, the dragoman

[1] Abulfeda's description of it runs thus :—"The river, which flows to Damascus, takes its rise beneath a Christian church, called El Faÿgeh, and becomes at once a rivulet, which is increased in its course by many other small springs. It then unites with a stream, called the Barada, and forms one river, which, at its entrance into the plain of Damascus, divides itself into six or seven branches running to the different quarters of the town." At this division there is a cascade, and an inscription on the rock in Cufic characters, which Mr. Burckhardt told me he had copied.

was despatched to state how impossible it was for her to remain in the house assigned to her. It was attempted to overrule her objections, but in vain; and, towards the close of the day, the pasha gave orders that the dragoman should be conducted from house to house with permission to choose, until one was found suitable. Lady Hester instructed M. Bertrand as to what she should like, but raised objections to every one that was proposed, until one, in which a Capugi Bashi, coming on some business from the Porte, had resided, met with her approbation.

The fatigue of moving being over, the Christian whose house Lady Hester had quitted was to be satisfied, and his expectations were raised to an inconceivable pitch, grounded upon her supposed riches and greatness. Some idea may be formed from one article of his bill, which was no more than a tumbler of lemonade, "Sherbet for the queen on her arrival, 15 piasters." His visionary prospects, however, were soon annihilated, and he was desired to content himself with a fair price for two nights spent in his house, being told that he should recollect how little claim, according to the practice of Turkish grandees, he had to any thing at all.

The house to which we were now removed was situate in the best quarter of Damascus, not far from the palace, and near the bazars. It opened through a narrow passage into an oblong marble paved court. In the middle of the court was a large

basin, shaded by two very lofty lemon trees, into which two brazen serpents poured a constant supply of fresh water. At one end of the court was a saloon with a tesselated marble pavement; at the other an alcove or recess for a divàn or sofa, with a small apartment on each side. A double staircase led up to a considerable height on the outside of the left wall of the court; at one end, to two rooms, which Lady Hester occupied for sleeping and dressing-rooms, and at the other to a large saloon, which was destined to receive visitors. There were consequently but six rooms in all, yet was this considered a spacious house; for the Orientals sleep in the same room where they sit, their beds being removed in the day-time to large recesses formed in the walls for that purpose, and hidden by a curtain.

Curiosity, it may be supposed, was much excited by Lady Hester's arrival. There are two monasteries at Damascus, one of monks of the order of St. Francis, the other of Capuchins. The society of these monks is generally sought after by Europeans; and, in the expectation of the distinguished reception they fancied they should receive, the superior of each monastery came to offer his services to her ladyship: but she would not see them. They were told that, as the quarter of the town she lived in was entirely Turkish, and as the sight of priests in this neighbourhood would be looked upon as an infringement of the rules observed by them, of seldom or never coming thither, they were requested

not to repeat their visit: but she received with civility Mr. Chaboceau, a French doctor, seventy years of age, very deaf; for his privileges were more extended, as all quarters of the city are alike open to medical practitioners. This gentleman has or had a son living in England, at Uxbridge.

These measures, purposely made public among the servants, and repeated by the master of the house to his friends in the city, were construed into demonstrations of her esteem for the Turks, and contributed not a little to her popularity.

In the mean time, after resting herself a day or two, she prepared to ride out. No sooner were the horses brought to the door, than a crowd of women and children assembled; the gravity of the male part of the Turkish population seldom yielding so far to curiosity, as to allow them to join in a mob. When she came out, as she stood upon the horse-block, (of which there generally is one at the entrance of most houses) a smile on the people around served at once to prepossess them in her favour. She was accompanied by no one, but her young interpreter, Giorgio, and Mohammed, her Janissary, thus throwing herself entirely on the discretion of the inhabitants. Her first excursion naturally gave us some uneasiness; but it was without foundation. A grave, yet pleasing look, an unembarrassed, yet commanding, demeanour met the ideas of the Turks, whose manners are of this cast. We were, however, somewhat diverted by the

different reports which were spread respecting her among them. It was generally supposed, from her fair complexion, that she painted white: and it was confidently affirmed, as her appearance was so little European, that, although by birth an Englishwoman, she was of Ottoman descent, and had Mahometan blood in her veins.

The Turkish feast of Ramazán was now celebrating, during which Mahometans are accustomed to fast from sunrise to sunset for the space of a whole moon. Little business, excepting what is unavoidable, is transacted all this time. The day is beguiled as much as possible in sleep, by which the cravings of appetite and the desire for drink are considerably deadened. The first half of the night is devoted to feasting and visits.

Lady Hester was anxious to be presented to the pasha as soon as possible, and an early evening was fixed on. Previous to it, she signified to the Jews, brothers of him of Acre, her intention to visit them. They filled at the court of Damascus, as has been said, the post of seràfs, which word signifies bankers or money-changers, but embraces a more comprehensive meaning. The wealth of this family was enormous, and the house they lived in was not inferior to any one in the city: its exterior, however, was mean in appearance, and gave no idea of the magnificence within. All the houses in Damascus are built of clay, beat up with chopped straw, and made into a

composition,[1] which, when dried in the sun, becomes very tenacious. Houses so built have, externally, a mean appearance ; and as the Jews throughout Turkey are odious to the natives, they are compelled, from policy, to give to the quarter in which they reside a dirtiness of appearance that shall not rouse the over-sensitive jealousy of their masters. Accordingly, on entering the Jews' quarter at Damascus, the organs of smell and sight are much incommoded, and any thing but architectural beauty or cleanliness is found in it. Haym's street-door opened, and we went down two or three steps into a stone entry about fifteen or twenty feet square, to the left of which was a dirty alcove, with a carpet on the floor, and cushions against the wall, and opposite to it a small filthy room. A staircase led from this court to two rooms above, of the same description. Any stranger, but particularly a Turk, enters thus far, and, whether he comes for the business of a moment or for a few days, it is here the master of the house sees him, and it is here that his meals are brought to him.

Opposite to the front door was another which opened by a crooked entry into the first grand court of the house, so that nobody from the strangers' court could see into this, even if the door was ajar. Here began to be displayed the wealth of the proprietor. The

[1] These walls were known to the ancients, and called parietes formacei. The same composition is still used at and near Lyons in France, and called pisé : as also in Cornwall.

court was spacious, and in the centre was a large basin, into which water spouted and gave coolness to the surrounding apartments, which were numerous. A large one on the left was covered with a rich Persian carpet, and the cushions of the sofas, which ran round the three sides, were of Damascus satins. On the right was a smaller one, more magnificent, but on the same plan. We entered only those two in the first court.

A passage led into a second court, the pavement of which was inlaid with marble mosaic, and in the centre was a basin with a fountain. Round it were numerous apartments; and these were destined for the harým; nor should I have enjoyed the privilege of seeing them (as no men enter here) had I not accompanied her ladyship, who, as a female, was necessarily conducted to them. Nothing could equal the magnificence of these rooms, two of which, at the extremity, were peculiarly beautiful, and between them was an alcove, which is inseparable from the houses of the Levantines, and which is no other than a saloon with three sides to it, the fourth side, fronting the court, being entirely open to the air, with an arch thrown over it. All these apartments had the walls painted and gilded in arabesque, and none of the ceilings were plain, but painted in stars, in lozenges, or in some diagram or device.

Neither in the first nor the second court was there an upper story, excepting over one room, where all the

splendour of which the other apartments partake is united. We ascended to it by stone stairs, from the court, on the outside, in the open air, and, as is the case with all the staircases throughout Syria, it was steep and inelegant. On entering this *âléah* (so an upper room is called, and so the word signifies) the eye was struck with the glitter of the walls and ceiling, resembling the descriptions of fairy palaces. Mock precious stones, mirrors, gilding, and arabesque paintings, covered it every where, and the floor was of elegant mosaic. The pipes with their amber heads; the coffee-cups, with a gold stud at the bottom, on which ambergris was stuck to perfume this beverage as it dissolved in it; the embroidered napkins to wipe the mouth with; and the brilliant colours and high flavour of the sherbets corresponded with the grandeur of the house. But how shall we reconcile to all this the dishes served up on tinned copper, and set on a table of the same metal? This anomaly will be explained in another place.

But the interview with the Pasha himself was the ceremony most talked of. I did not accompany her ladyship on this occasion, owing to a temporary indisposition. Sayd Suliman Pasha had spent his life at the court of Sultan Selim and his predecessors, and was considered as a finished gentleman Turk. It must indeed have been a formidable undertaking to a woman, when, after being led through antechambers by the light of flaring candles, which threw their gleam on the arms of numerous soldiers and attendants, who waited in still

and fearful silence, she was ushered into a long saloon, through two rows of the pasha's suite, where at the upper end sat—and he alone was sitting—on a crimson sofa, in a most starched attitude, the small but dignified man. He rose not to receive her, and by a motion of his hand signified to her to sit. M. Bertrand, the dragoman, stood by her side, and by the side of the pasha stood the Jew Rafäel. M. Bertrand trembled so much that his tongue faltered when he interpreted the pasha's first salutations, nor was he for some time sufficiently collected to repeat with precision what was said to him. Lady Hester was not at all disconcerted. Her interpreter, Giorgio, whom she had ordered to attend her to observe if her answers were correctly translated, was prevented from entering the presence-chamber because he wore arms: it being as ill-bred to pay visits of ceremony in Turkey with arms on, as in England to wear boots on a similar occasion. After a reasonable time, Lady Hester retired, having first begged the pasha to accept of a handsome snuff-box. In return a beautiful Arabian horse was led to her door after the visit was over; and the bearers of the presents received from the respective parties money of about a quarter the value of the gifts.

On her return home from this visit, her janissary, Hadj Mohammed el Ludkány, whilst standing before her to receive her orders for the morrow, said, "Your ladyship's reception was very grand; and upon her replying, "Yes, but this is all vanity," he remarked, "Oh! khanum" (or my lady), "you carry the splen-

dour of royalty on your forehead, with the humility of a dervise at your heart."

Lady Hester scarcely found time to write to her friends an account of her adventures; but we may extract from a letter, already published in a periodical work, a few anecdotes, as related in her own words.

Lady Hester Stanhope to Lieutenant-General Oakes.

Damascus, September 30th, 1812.

My dear General,

The only letters I have received since the shipwreck are those which you directed to the care of Colonel Misset; I was quite happy to hear from you again, and that you were well, though so very busy; indeed, I fear it would not be a compliment for me to write half I have to say, even had I time.

If I was once to begin to give you my history since I left Acre, I should fill all my paper with the honours which have been paid me. The pasha here has given me two horses, but neither fit for you; another, which was presented me by the Emir Beshýr, or Prince of the Druses, would have just done; but I found he was so vicious (a rare thing in this country), that I gave him to my janissary, who is the best rider I have seen since I left Egypt.

I must now speak to you of the Druses, that extraordinary and mysterious people who inhabit the Mount Lebanon. I hope, if I ever see you again, to be able to reach Mr. North[1] in my account of them. I will only now mention a fact, which I can state as positive, having been eye-witness to it — it is that they eat raw meat. I purchased of a Druse an immense sheep, the tail weighing eleven pounds, and desired it to be taken to a village, where I ordered the people to assemble to eat. When I arrived the sheep was alive; the moment it was killed it was

[1] The late Lord Guildford.

skinned, and brought in raw upon a sort of dish made of matting, and in less than half an hour it was all devoured. The women eat of it as well as the men: the pieces of raw fat they swallowed were really frightful.

I understand so well feeling my ground with savage people, that I can ask questions no other person dares to put to them; but it would not be proper to repeat here those I asked even the *sages*, and still less their answers. Any one who asks a religious question may be murdered without either the Emir Beshýr (the Prince of the Mountain), or the Shaykh Beshýr (the governor) being able to punish the offender.

Nothing ever equalled the honours paid me by these men; the prince is a mild, amiable man,[1] but the governor has proved a Lucifer, and I am the first traveller he ever allowed to walk over his palace, which has been the scene of several massacres. The two days I spent with him I enjoyed very much; and you will be surprised at it when I tell you, that he judged it necessary to make one of his chief officers taste out of my cup before I drank, for fear of poison; but I am used to that; yet this man upon his knees before me looked more solemn than usual.

Believe me, my dear General,

Ever most sincerely yours,

H. L. S.

Captain Hope came to the coast to see after me, and gave me your kind message. He is a very worthy young man, and has been more kind to me than I could have thought it possible for a man, who was a stranger to me at Rhodes, could have been. A thousand thanks for the medicine-chest.

I have just heard that all the women belonging to the sultan have died of the plague, also his two children, and that 400

[1] How different from the opinion Lady Hester Stanhope afterwards formed of him, when she knew him better!

persons die a day at Constantinople. All the foreign ministers are shut up in palaces near the mouth of the Black Sea.

To his Excellency, Lieut-General Oakes, &c., &c., &c.
Malta.

From the time of our arrival, the applications to me for medical advice had been beyond measure numerous. Some were no more than excuses to get into the courtyard, in the expectation of seeing Lady Hester; many were from persons labouring under chronic and incurable maladies; and some, which afforded me extensive opportunities of seeing the interior of the houses in the city, were from those who were lying ill with acute diseases, which required my visits to their bedsides. However, the janissary, who officiated as porter, had much ado to keep the mob from the doors, and preserve good-humour among them; and the pertinacity of the women to gain admittance was truly laughable. This janissary was, from a long residence in his youth at Damascus, acquainted with the names of all the principal families of the place. When, therefore, the harým of any great man (the term harým being used in the East to express collectively all the women, whether wives or concubines, and their female servants, which belong to any one grandee)—when such a harým applied, Mohammed would signify it to me, and ask if they could not be admitted, to obtain a sight of her ladyship. On one occasion, thirteen in a body thus gained an entrance, and overwhelmed me with a volubility of questions truly comic.

The dress of the Damascus women, when out of doors, consists of a long white sheet, and over the face a muslin handkerchief, through which they can see very well without a possibility of having their features distinguished by others. If men are not present, this handkerchief is often thrown up over the top of the head; and some, fairer than others, if desirous of practising a little coquetry, and of letting their features be seen, will suffer the gentlemen to come upon them as if unawares, and then in haste throw down the handkerchief.

When I became better acquainted with the language and usages of the country, I was surprised to see how ineffectual all the devices of veils, cloaks, separate apartments, keepers, duennas, &c., are for guarding those who are resolved to be under no restraint: and a gentleman of the country assured me that there were few women who had not their gallants. I half believed him; for his own gallantries were notorious, and some circumstances that had happened to myself since our arrival at Damascus had given me a partial insight into the subject.

When it is considered how very fanatic the inhabitants of Damascus were,[1] and in what great abhorrence

[1] The fanaticism of the people of Damascus surpasses that of the inhabitants of Egypt, since a European cannot, without danger, show himself in the streets in the dress of his country, but is obliged to assume the costume of the East. A Christian or Jew cannot ride on horseback in the town: they are not permitted even to have an ass to ride upon.—*Ali Bey's Travels*, vol. ii., p. 273.

they held infidels; that native Christians could only inhabit a particular quarter of the town; and that no one of these, at the peril of having his bones broken by the first angry Turk he met, could ride on horseback within the walls, or wear as part of his dress any coloured cloth or turban that was showy, it will be matter of surprise how completely these prejudices were laid aside in favour of Lady Hester, and of those persons who were with her. She rode out every day; and, according to the custom of the country, coffee was poured on the road before her horse by several of the inhabitants, in order to do her honour. It was said that, in going through a bazar, all the people in it rose up as she passed—an honour never paid but to a pasha, or to the mufti; but, as I was not present, I do not assert the thing positively. On no occasion was she insulted; and, although a crowd constantly assembled at her door at the time she was expected to appear, and awaited her return home, she was always received by an applauding buzz of the populace; and the women, more especially, would call out, "Long life to her! may she live to return to her country!" with many other exclamations in use among them.

I took an early opportunity of visiting the lepers, who have an hospital in Damascus, to which they are sent from fifty miles round. They are never subjected to medical treatment, and are only housed here to rot. They live on the alms of the charitable, and send out, every summer, to a great distance, some of

their body to beg. For this purpose they plant themselves near the entrances of towns and villages, and, suspending a platter or half a cocoa-nut shell to a forked stick, retire a few paces off, that they may not deter the humane from approaching by the sight of their sores or the apprehension of contagion. The idea of the contagious nature of the disease is very general throughout the East, and I was treated as a madman for having once locked my hand in that of a leper's, to convince the bystanders that I was not of this opinion.

The rich have influence enough to evade the law which obliges lepers to be kept apart from their fellow-citizens. Mansûr, son of Syt Habûs, a Drûze princess, was generally said to be afflicted with leprosy, which the peasants of Mount Lebanon call aat, or da-el-kebýr (the great malady). His friends were very shy in saying what was the matter with him, lest the Turkish authorities should compel him to quit his house for the infirmary.

As it was Ramazán at this time, the whole city was illuminated every night, and the tops of the minarets were encircled with a row of lamps. Although, on these occasions, a Turkish city is less brilliant than the common lighting of a London street, still as, at other parts of the year, the streets are not lighted at all in the evening, these feeble illuminations during Ramazán have an enlivening effect. I went several times to the coffee-houses and shows, which form the

amusement of the people during this festival. I saw a rope-dancer who was tolerably clever; but his loose trowsers (tight breeches being considered unseemly) somewhat obstructed his movements.

A coffeehouse in Turkey means no more than a bench, from three to four feet deep, running along the front of a room open to the street, and shaded by a shed or sometimes by an orange-tree or a vine, upon which bench is spread a clean mat. There the guests squat crosslegged, or seat themselves on wooden or rush-bottomed stools. Small hookas, called nar-kýlys, are smoked, or else the long pipe; and coffee is served out in small cups, holding about two table-spoonfuls of liquid, at the price then of one para each cup. Nothing else is sold at these places, and the thirsty person trusts to the casual passing by of a sherbet-seller, or drinks the pure element out of an earthen jug that stands ready for those who call for water. There is one coffeehouse in Damascus where there is a fountain which throws up water enough to dance a round melon on the top of the jet for a long time without its falling.

It is during the evenings of Ramazán that the reciters of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, of the story of Antar, and of other amusing tales, are to be heard. The story-teller walks backward and for-ward, narrating with suitable gesticulation, and in a loud voice. Sometimes he is listened to, sometimes not, according to the fancy of the hearers or the in-

terest which the tale excites. Some of these men are very clever, and will move the passions as strongly as our best actors ; which will not appear strange when it is known that, in the eloquence of common conversation, the Arabs, both of towns and of the Desert, are inferior to no people in the world.

The karacûz or *Ombres Chinoises* is one of the favourite shows of this people. A subject often treated by them was—the sickness of a lady ; her wish to have a Frank doctor ; the blunders of the Frank doctor in broken Arabic, when questioning the lady respecting the seat and nature of her malady ; the jealousy of the husband ; the belabouring the doctor ; the quarrel of the husband and wife ; &c., &c.

There are performers on violins with seven strings. Some of these from time to time accompanied their instruments with the voice, and sung plaintive airs that seemed to affect their audience even to tears.

The Ottomans in general appeared to me to be very fond of sweetmeats, and indulged their children with them as much or more than fond mothers do in England. In Ramazán, the shops which sold them were much in request. There were several kinds unknown, or at least not known to me. One sort, of which I was particularly fond, was haláwy jozy, or blanched walnuts embedded in a composition of dibs and almond meal. Damascus is famous for its preserved apricots, which are sent to all parts of the Turkish empire.

The bazars of Damascus are rows of shops covered

in: they are as well furnished almost as those of Constantinople, but are particularly rich in the stuffs which are manufactured in the place. I regret that I did not note down the names and texture of these brocades, and of the silks and satins, as also of the cottons. Of the taste displayed in the colours of these latter, some idea may be formed when it is known that all the prevailing patterns for gowns among us during the last eight or ten years have been copied from them.

In the mean time, almost the whole of each day was taken up by the importunate applications of the sick, many of whom, affected with incurable diseases, would not believe that there were cases in which all art is vain. I was requested to give to the consumptive a fresh pair of lungs, to make the paralytic walk, to restore sight to the blind, and to do many other things equally easy of accomplishment. Abd el Rahmân, the proprietor of the house in which we lived, was very instrumental in carving me out work of this sort: and when I reproached him for it, he said—"What will you have me do? I cannot define to them the exact limits of your abilities; and, although I am sure you do not perform miracles, nay, although I may suppose, as you say, that you come to seek knowledge, not to pretend to impart it, still I know that the ardent imaginations of my fellow-countrymen will always make an Hippocrates of a Frank doctor, and that the sight of you will do them good, even though your medicines should not."

Abd el Rahmán, one morning, introduced to me two black eunuchs, by the names of Mukhtar Aga and Ambár Aga, informing me that they held places of trust in the administration of the female department of the family of Ahmed Bey, son of Abdullah Pasha, ex-pasha of Damascus. I was already so far accustomed to the dignities and the titles of the country as to understand the enumeration of these to mean—I present you the deputies of a great man. I had also heard frequent mention made of the ancient house of *Adam*, the family name of Ahmed Bey, and that it was considered one of the oldest and richest in Syria.

After some prefatory discourse, these gentlemen told me that Sulymán Bey, the eldest son of Ahmed Bey, was given over by his physicians, and that the father, hearing of my presence in Damascus, entreated me to go and see him. I replied, that, in every house where I had been, I had found persons so little disposed to obey my directions as to make me despair of ever doing any good, and that, therefore, I declined going. Abd el Rahmán was thunderstruck on hearing me refuse to attend on such a distinguished family, and when too the heir was ill. The messengers went away, and in about half an hour returned, and said so much of the father's grief at my refusal that I then yielded to their solicitations.

I found his son on a silk mattress, placed on the sofa, in an open alcove that looked on a marble paved court shaded by lofty orange and lemon-trees. There

were three physicians present, a Turk and two Christians. Ahmed Bey received me very politely, and eagerly begged me to restore his son to health. The boy was about thirteen or fourteen—ugly, of diminutive stature, and somewhat hump-backed. He was labouring under anasarca, consequent on a long intermittent fever. After examining him, I said I saw no reason to doubt of the possibility of curing him. I was then asked how I would do it, which I declined telling: for I had no one but my servant for interpreter, and the little Italian which he knew made it impossible to explain my intentions clearly.

The bey told me that nothing had been left unattempted which the faculty of the city could think of. His son had been sewed up in a sheepskin fresh from the warm carcase. He had taken pills made of powdered pearl; he had lived six days on nothing but goats' flesh; he had had pigeons' skins put hot on his feet; but all had been unavailing. I merely observed that these remedies might have much merit in them, but that the practice of medicine in England was somewhat different; and, if he wished me to prescribe, my first condition was that I should not be controlled by anybody. After some other conversation, I went away.

About three hours afterwards, I was summoned again, and desired to act as I chose. Not to tire the reader, I was fortunate enough to restore the boy to perfect health, and the father signified to me that

he would thank me in the Eastern way. On an appointed day, I was conducted to the vestibule of the bath, where Sulimân Bey, attended by half-a-dozen servants, awaited my coming. We undressed and entered the bath, having each a silk apron on. About an hour was consumed in the ceremonies of shaving the head, washing, depilation, &c.; after which we returned to the dressing-room, where we were enveloped in embroidered napkins, and lay down to repose. Pipes, coffee, and sherbets, were served. When it was time to dress, the bey ordered a page to invest me with the dress of honour which had been prepared for me. It consisted of an entire suit of Turkish clothes, with a pelisse, and three pieces of Damascus silks not made up. The whole might be valued at fifty pounds. After dinner I returned home, and could perceive, by the cheerfulness of my groom, who generally held my horse at the door, that he too had not been forgotten.

On the morrow, I was invited to a rural fête. I accompanied Ahmed Bey and his three sons, followed by his black and white servants, in all about twenty-five persons, on horses richly caparisoned, to a garden in the environs of the city. Beneath the shade of orange-trees, by the side of a stream that ran through the garden, carpets were spread, and a repast was served up. The bey had ordered several dishes, which, as being rare, he thought would please me. Through an opening in the trees, our seats commanded a view

of the plain of Damascus, which, in the cultivated part, is one of the richest in foliage I ever saw. We sat, smoked, drank coffee and sherbet; and afterwards the pages were matched against each other to throw the giryd or javelin. The day passed away delightfully, and at sunset we returned to the city.

The bey expressed himself very grateful to me for having saved his son; and hence began an acquaintance between Lady Hester and him, which afterwards ripened into a long and durable friendship.

I cannot help mentioning an occurrence which happened in consequence of this cure. The bey, having conceived a favourable opinion of my skill, consulted me for himself and all his family. Among the rest was his sister, a young lady of sixteen, and of the most dazzling beauty. Upon that occasion, I was conducted to the harým by her brother, the bey, the women being previously warned to keep out of sight,[1] so that I saw no one but her. He desired her to unveil before me, which she did without any affectation.[2] Lady Hester soon afterwards paid a visit to

[1] This warning is generally made by the word *testúr*, which is bawled out by a eunuch who precedes you as you enter the harým.

[2] She was without colour on her cheeks, and it would seem that rosy cheeks do not form part of Eastern beauty. Lady Hester used often to repeat a compliment which was paid to her own pale looks in Egypt. "My white face," she would say, "in this country pleases the people amazingly, and the Turks con-

the bey's wife,[1] and was received with great ceremony.

In the same manner, she visited the lady of Hassan Pasha, of Assâd Pasha, and of several others, persons of distinction, so that she had an opportunity of seeing all who were most eminent for rank and beauty throughout the city. There was an Abyssinian slave, sixteen years of age, one of Ahmed Bey's wife's female attendants, whom her ladyship described as exquisitely handsome. In the harýms of all these families I too was admitted, but it was to see the sick. Wherever I was called I invariably found the patient, if too ill to rise, lying on a bed spread on the floor in the middle of the chamber, with no bedstead or curtains, but sometimes with a silk musquito net temporarily suspended. The females were always veiled on entering, generally by pinching a shawl

sider the red faces of the English women odious. Witness the story told of those who were left behind by the English army after the expedition to Egypt in 1805, and were taken by the Turks. Their new masters washed them and washed them, hoping to get the brick-dust out of their cheeks; and, when they found it impossible, they sent them about their business. Black women, the Turks said, they knew and liked, and white ones; but red women they never heard of till then."

[1] In the plague of 1814, the bey's wife and twenty of his household died. Suliman Bey had the plague, but got over it. About a year afterwards, he fell from the terrace of the house and was killed. Ahmed Bey never recovered his spirits after these accumulated misfortunes.

over the face, so as to leave one eye[1] only visible ; but would for a reasonable cause (as, for example, to look at their tongue) draw the veil aside. At any house where it became necessary for me to repeat my visits, these formalities were by degrees disused, and always first of all by the comeliest women. The women and men always wear a night-dress when in bed, generally consisting of a wrapping gown and a quilted jacket; for the coverlet, being wadded with cotton, and about one inch thick, does not, from its stiffness, keep in the warmth sufficiently—the sheet, moreover, is sewed to it; and therefore they wear night-clothes to prevent exposure to cold.

Mohadýn Effendy was a gentleman of the most polished manners, who had lived much at court, and who moved in the best society of Damascus. He was exceedingly polite and attentive to Lady Hester, and was one, among some others, who seemed to employ himself in trying to dive into the motives of her residence in a land so foreign in its climate, customs, and language, to her own.

There is a class of persons in Turkey unknown at present in Europe, but very common during the middle ages—I mean the captains of mercenary troops, who sell their services to the prince who can pay them

[1] To this custom of looking out of one eye allusion is made in Solomon's Song, c. iv., v. 9. "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes."

best. There were, in 1812, three of them, who, living in the heart of the pashalik of Damascus, might be said to be independent of their legitimate masters, and to have a jurisdiction of their own. I was acquainted professionally with all three: their names were Ozûn Ali, Hamed Bey, and Muly Ismael. Ozûn Ali had a very fine palace in Damascus; the bey, Hamed, who was the son of a pasha, lived like a daring soldier, who devoted himself with equal ardour to Mars and Venus; but Muly Ismael, now somewhat advanced in years, was a politic chieftain, whose influence and weight had, no doubt, much sway in the province. Hamed Bey gave a horse to Lady Hester, who, in return, sent him a brace of pistols. These men were employed, on all occasions of insurrection, for levying imposts and contributions, for displacing motsellems and inferior governors; and probably occasioned as much alarm to the pashas themselves as to those against whom they were employed.

There is to the south of the city, just without the gate, a spacious meadow reserved for the amusements of the inhabitants, whither horsemen go to play at the game of giryd, idlers to sit on the turf; and where sometimes caravans assemble previous to their departure on a distant journey. On one side of the meadow are two or three caves, excavated in a sandy rock. I had, in my rides through it, observed that a large checkered sheet was often suspended before the entrance of these caves; but it was not until I saw a

soldier and a female issuing from one of them, that I conjectured what kind of inhabitants they contained. Generally speaking throughout Turkey, the police is extremely severe against frail women; and here, although their meretricious blandishments were, it seemed, more publicly displayed than elsewhere, they were, nevertheless, obliged to live without the walls of the city. It is not intended to say that they could not reside within them if they chose, but they find their advantage in the privacy that these obscure dwellings afford to their visiters. Damascus was, in those days, the only place where I saw women of this class parading the streets, almost unveiled, and inveigling the passers-by: but they were compelled to confine themselves entirely to one bazar.

I was one day reading at home when a Turkish woman of the middling rank of life came to consult me. Whilst speaking with her, the hour of namàz, or prayer, was cried from the mosque; when she immediately broke off the conversation, and signified that, with my permission, she would say her prayers. She went through the show of washing as if she had had water before her, and she repeated the *fathah*,[1] without paying the least regard to my presence. It did not, however, happen to me to see women pray openly, excepting in this one instance, and once at Latakia on

[1] Fathah, the opening chapter of the Koran.

the seashore: for it is not considered seemly for females to exhibit themselves to the gaze of the public under any circumstances. Lady Hester's slave constantly prayed before any one indoors.

CHAPTER II.

Lady Hester's intended journey to Palmyra—Objections to it—Hanah Fakhah—Difficulties of a journey to Palmyra—Illness of Mr. B. on his road from Aleppo to Damascus—The Author goes to his assistance—Osman Aga—Masûd Aga—Village of Yabrûd—Author's reception by Osman Aga—Carah, burgh—Character of Masûd Aga—Use of Narkýly—Aspect of the Desert—Hamlet of Hassiah—Dûrra bread—City of Hems—River Orontes—City of Hamah—Mûsa Koblán—Visit from him—Arrival of Mr. Barker and Mr. B.—Description of Hamah—Clogs—Waterwheels—Coolness and heat produced by the same means—Costume of the female peasants—Doors of houses—Air—Panoramic prospect—Manufactures—Christians of Hamah—Inundations—Messrs. B. and Barker go to Bâalbec—Description of Hems—Pyramidal sepulchre—Tomb of Khaled—Citadel—Lake of Hems—Orontes river—Cara—March of troops—Yabrûd—Springs of Ras el ayn—Mâlûla—Grottoes and Sarcophagi—Michael Rasáti—Account of M. Lascaris and of Madame Lascaris—Nebk—Dress of M. Lascaris—His character—Return of the Author to Damascus.

From the time of Lady Hester's arrival at Damascus, her mind had been incessantly busied in the endeavour to bring to bear her intended journey to the ruins of Palmyra. To this end, she had conferred

with every person whom she thought capable of giving information on the subject. The pasha's bankers, Yusef and Rafaël, endeavoured to dissuade her from an undertaking which they considered very dangerous; but told her that, in case of resolving upon it, the pasha would furnish her with a body of troops for her safe conduct, and that he and they would not be responsible for her safety, unless she went so protected. For it was argued that, although the Arabs would do no violence to her, they would probably make her a prisoner, and demand an exorbitant ransom.

A man named Hanah Fakhah, residing at Damascus, but said to be a native Egyptian, speaking French, which he learned when the French army was in Egypt, and who had accompanied Mr. Fiott[1] to Palmyra, offered himself as capable of conducting us thither in safety, from the friendship and connection he pretended to have with the chief shaykhs of the Desert. For a long time, Lady Hester was inclined to rely on his assumed importance; but subsequent information made her decline having anything to do with him. Distracted with the various reports that were made to her, she knew not what to do. At last she caused letters to be written to the Emir of the Anizýs, Mohammed el Fadhel, desiring an interview with him.

But, in order to understand the difficulties she had to contend with, it is proper to relate in what manner they had proved almost insuperable to other English

[1] Dr. John Fiott Lee, F.R.S., of Hartwell House.

travellers. Up to this period, the road to Palmyra had been little frequented by Europeans: and, of many Englishmen who had lately been in Syria, we could hear of three only who had accomplished the journey, the rest having been deterred through fear of the Bedouin Arabs, and by the obstacles that present themselves in crossing twenty leagues of desert, exposed to the chance of perishing from hunger and thirst. Of those three who went, one was stripped and robbed, and returned to Aleppo in his shirt and drawers, after a series of sufferings that would form a romance. One performed the journey in the depth of winter, when the Arabs keep their tents, and when the rains saved him from the want of water; and both these went in the disguise of pedlars, or poor merchants. But for Lady Hester, whose intention had been divulged, and whose sex and rank continued to draw much attention to her movements, secrecy was impossible.

She, therefore, seemed inclined to adopt the plan, suggested by the pasha, of going with a formidable escort. At the same time, he gave her to understand that the Emir Mahannah, chief of the Bedouins, was in little or no subjection to the Porte, and that the inhabitants of Tadmûr (as Palmyra is called in Arabic) were completely out of the reach of the arm of justice, in case they should use any foul play against her. The troops had already received orders to hold themselves in readiness to march; the camels were hired, the presents intended for the Bedouins were bought,

and the day almost fixed for departure. What Lady Hester's reflections and plans were will be better understood from two letters which she wrote to an intimate friend about this time.

Lady Hester Stanhope to ——

Damascus, October 10th, 1812.

My dear ——,

I am here yet, not liking to stir till I see a little what turn things take. The pasha has offended all the cavalry (the Delibashes commanded by the son of the famous deposed pasha, Yousef Pasha): the infantry (the Albanians) are on the side of the present pasha, and every day a battle is expected. A report also has been in circulation that 50,000 Wahabees are within four days' journey of this city, but I do not believe it. It takes its rise from a letter from Mecca to the pasha, saying several thousand dromedaries mounted by Wahabees have set off they know not where, but not improbably for this place, which they once before attempted to take, but were driven back, after having burnt and ransacked every village upon the road. Why this concerns me is for this reason: the strongest tribe of Bedouin Arabs, my friends, who do not like the present pasha, will probably join any party against him, and there will be a fine confusion in the desert as well as here, and the roads in every direction will be filled with Delibashes, &c., &c. These men are more dreaded in every part of Turkey than you can imagine, as they stick at nothing. But luckily for me I am well known to some of them, who have been in the habit of seeing me with their chief looking at their horses; he has visited me accompanied by them, and they have everywhere treated me with the greatest civility, even when their chief has not been with them; so I have less to fear than any one else, but yet when such disturbances take place few are safe.

Should the worst come to the worst, I shall take fifty of them, and set off to my friend, the Emir Beshýr, the Prince of the Mountain, where I shall be quite safe. He has troops at his disposal, which he can assemble at will, and nothing was ever so kind as he has been to me; therefore, hear what you may, believe me better off than any one else. The bey, who commands the Delibashes, took a great fancy to me when at Cairo, and everything he can command is at my disposal, I know; he is a simple, honest soldier, and has no intrigue about him at all, and is extremely beloved by the troops. It is a good thing that old North is safe off, for he would be in a sad fright. I am not at all, knowing my own presence of mind under all circumstances, and that I have excellent friends in this country. Even with the French I am upon terms of friendship and confidence; they command everything upon the coast; for we have nobody in this country but Mr. Barker.

I scribble in great haste, as a messenger to Acre is just going off. Be perfectly easy about me; my good luck will not forsake me, when any confusion takes place. All I can say about myself sounds like conceit; but others could tell you I am the oracle of the Arabs, and the darling of all the troops, who seem to think that I am a deity because I can *ride*, and because I wear arms; and the fanatics all bow before me, because the Dervises think me a wonder, and have given me a piece of Mahomet's tomb, and I have won the heart of the pasha by a letter I wrote him from Dayr el Kamar. Hope will tell you how I got on upon the coast, and if he could make anything of the Pasha of Acre, his ministers, or the rest of them, who were all at my feet. I was even admitted into the library of the famous mosque, and fumbled over the books at pleasure—books that no Christian dare touch, or even cast his eyes upon.

Adieu, and believe me ever,

most sincerely yours,

H. L. S.

I sent you, about a fortnight ago, a large packet for England by a respectable Damascus merchant going to Malta. Pray do not put any women or fools into a fright about the state of things in this country; besides, to tell the truth is here often the greatest danger one can run.

Lady Hester Stanhope to ——

Damascus, October 12th.

My dear ——,

The Wahabees (which were the subject of my last letter) have not been heard of near this town; it is said that a small number of them have arrived at Palmyra, but that is of no consequence. Whether it was the report of their being upon the road for this place, or that the pasha was unable to settle the dispute with his troops, which induced him to send a positive order to an old figure, like Sir David,[1] to come here directly (the head of everything military in Syria), I know not; but this sensible, popular, and active old fellow appeared, and shortly after was commanded to take a strong body of troops, and go over all the pashalic of Damascus instead of the pasha. During the time he was here he expressed a great wish to make my acquaintance, and that I should visit him; "for," said he, "I shall be very jealous of my young chief if she does not." Knowing the state of things, the rebellious spirit of the troops, their exultation at his arrival, &c., I considered this visit as an awful thing, yet I was determined to go, as everything military seemed to have set their heart upon it.

I first was obliged to ride through a yard full of horses, then to walk through several hundred, perhaps a thousand Delibashes, and then to present myself to not less than fifty

[1] Sir David Dundas.

officers and grandees, the old chief in the corner, and my friend the young bey (Yousef Pasha's son) next to him, who rose to give me his place. I remained there about an hour; the old fellow was so delighted with me that he gave me his own house upon the borders of the desert for as long a time as I chose to inhabit it; he offered me a hundred Delibashes to escort me all over Syria; he sent off an express to put, as he said, his most confidential officer under my command, that nothing I asked was to be refused. In short, nothing could equal his civility, besides, it was accompanied with a degree of *heartiness* which you seldom meet with in a Turk. The next day he sent me a very fine little two-year-old Arab horse to train up in my own way.

The chief of 40,000 Arabs, Mahanna el Fadel, arrived here about the same time to get 4,000 camels, and several thousand sheep released, which the pasha had seized. His sons have been my friends ever since I came here, but as the father is reckoned as harsh as he is cunning, I little thought to manage him as I have done. He, his eldest son, and about twenty-five Arabs, dined with me, and were all enchanted, and the *meleki*, (the queen) is in the mouth of every Arab, both in Damascus and the desert. As to the Wahabees, Mahanna assures me that, as one of *his family*, he shall guarantee me with his life, and whether I meet or do not meet with them it is the same thing. To see this extraordinary people is what I wish, but not in the town or environs of Damascus, to be confounded with the crowd of those they wish to injure.

B. and Mr. Barker are now upon their road from Aleppo, because they chose to take it into their heads I must go with a caravan to Palmyra. No caravan goes the road I intended to go, and if it had, as I told them, nothing should persuade me to join one. This put them into a fright, so they are coming with a wire thing, a tartavan, which Mr. Barker pronounces

necessary, but which all the consuls in the universe shall never persuade me to get into. What an absurd idea, in case of danger, to be stuck upon a machine, the tartavangees running away and leaving you to the mercy of two obstinate mules! the swiftest horse one can find is the best thing, and what the Arabs often owe their lives to. My second messenger (saying more positively than the first, that whether they come or not, I would have nothing to do with a tartavan) had only left this place three days when the caravan between Homs and Damascus (composed of several hundred persons, and fifty armed men, I believe) was attacked by Arabs, and sixteen men killed. Who is right, I or the consul-general?

The pasha answers for my safety, so do all the chiefs of the Delibashes, and so do the Arabs, but they do not answer for rich, cowardly merchants, who are left to take care of themselves. By this time, Barker must be half-way from Aleppo, therefore, it is right I should think about setting off to meet them at Homs: four armed men is all I shall take, just to keep watch about the tents at night, and to have an eye upon the horses, that no stray robber may make off with them. As to great tribes, &c., I am perfectly secure with them, I know.

During my residence here, I have made a great number of very pleasant acquaintances, and have seen all the most famous harems. I believe I am the only person who can give an account of the manner in which a great Turk is received by his wives and women. A particular friend of mine, who has four wives and three mistresses, took me to see them himself. None of his wives sat down in his presence, or even came up upon the raised part of the room where we sat, except to serve his pipe and give him coffee. When he invited me to a dinner, apparently for fifteen or twenty people, I of course thought the poor women were to eat; but not at all; they only presented him with what he wanted from the hands of the slaves, and

never spoke but when he asked some question. Yet this is one of the most pleasant and good-natured men I know, and with me he behaves just like anybody else, and is full as civil and attentive as another man, but in this instance he does not consider his dignity lowered.

The other day I was paying a visit to the wife of a very great effendi (who, though not the most agreeable, is perhaps the cleverest man I know here); not less than fifty women were assembled in the harem to see me; when in came the lord and master—all put on their veils, except his wife and his own women, and he made a sign and all retired. He then told me he had sent for my little dragoman, who shortly appeared. We talked some time and then he proposed dining; he had led me into a beautiful court paved with coloured marble, with fountains playing amongst the orange-trees, and in a sort of alcove we found dinner prepared, or rather supper, for it was at sunset. Everything was served in high style by black female slaves, and a black gentleman. Immense gilt candlesticks, with candles nearly six feet high, were set on the ground, with a great illumination of small elegant lamps suspended in clusters in different parts of the court; the proud man talked a great deal, and kept my little dragoman nearly four hours upon his knees, having fetched a great book to talk astronomy, upon which he asked me ten thousand questions. In short, he kept me there till nearly ten o'clock, an hour past the time which, if any one is found in the streets, they are to have their heads cut off; such is the pasha's new decree. All the gates were shut, but all opened for me, and not a word said. The pasha cuts off a head or two nearly every day; but yet I do not think he has added much to his own security, for he is by no means liked, nor does he command half so much as my friend, the old Delibash.

What surprises me so much is the extreme civility of the

Turks to a Christian; for Christians they detest much more here than in any other part of the Sultan's dominions. A woman in man's clothes, a woman on horseback—everything directly in opposition to their strongest prejudices, and yet never even a smile of impertinence, let me go where I will. If it was as it is in England, it would be quite impossible to get through with it all. Like Doctor Pangloss, I always try to think that everything is for the best; if I had not been shipwrecked, I should have seen nothing here; if I had been born a man instead of a woman, I could not have entered all the harems as I have done, and got acquainted with all the Turkish customs, and seen all that is to be seen of most magnificent—for a Turk's splendour is in his harem: the rooms, the dresses, the whole air of luxury is not to be described.

Adieu, my dear ——. I have written you a long letter, because I thought my last might have put you in a fright. Had the Wahabees come here, it would have been no joke, at least for the inhabitants of this town, for they burn and destroy all before them.

When you have read this, will you enclose it to Lord Ebrington, who is so good as always to feel anxious about me, and I have not time to write to him now, and I shall have no opportunity of sending another letter for a long time, most probably. Pray remember me most kindly to Captain Hope, and tell him I prosper.

Believe me,

Ever yours, most sincerely,

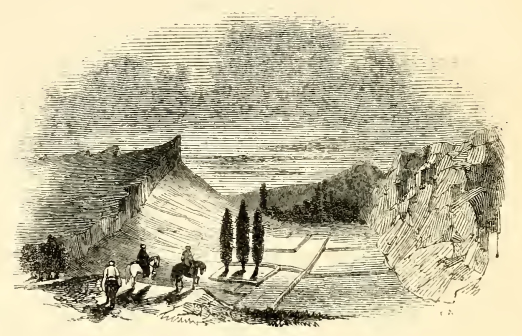
H. L. Stanhope.

Things were in this position when a messenger arrived from Mr. B. to say that he had quitted Aleppo, accompanied by Mr. Barker, the English consul, and,

on his road to Damascus, had been taken ill at an obscure village, but was not so bad as to be incapable of travelling. This account induced her ladyship to request me immediately to go to his assistance. I accordingly departed, October 15th, on horseback, with a mule carrying my bed and medicine-chest, and with Ibrahim, my groom, on another horse.

On the road I was going there lay a village, called Yabrûd, the Shaykh of which, Osman Aga, had sent to Damascus to obtain my advice concerning a troublesome complaint with which he had been afflicted for some years. He was the brother-in-law of one Masûd Aga, Shaykh of Carah, a considerable burgh on the skirts of the Desert. In Masûd Aga was vested whatever authority the pasha had over Palmyra. This was little indeed; since the Bedouins, by their proximity, had considerable influence over the movements and the conduct of the inhabitants. However, it was proposed to Lady Hester, that, in case of her going to Palmyra, Masûd Aga should escort her. She was therefore anxious to do an act of civility to his relation, Osman Aga; and it was agreed that I should stop at Yabrûd in my way. There happened to be at Damascus one of Masûd Aga's people, named Yahyah, who had been sent by his master to inquire when Lady Hester proposed setting off for Palmyra. He undertook to be my guide; and we departed from Damascus on the morning of the 15th October, and at nine in the evening arrived at Yabrûd, after being

on horseback thirteen hours. The road had been good the whole way, excepting where we ascended Gebel Yabrûd.



VILLAGE OF YABRUD.

Yabrûd is a large village of great beauty, situate in a plain as you emerge from a narrow pass between two ridges of rock, and having many orchards and gardens extending as much as a mile from the village, and watered by a stream which runs from a spring called Ras-el-Ayn.[1] Several sepulchres, excavated in the neighbouring rocks, denoted the antiquity of the place. The inhabitants are Mahometans, Greeks, and Christians. There are the ruins of a church of the middle ages: and it is the residence of a Greek bishop.

Osman Aga received me in his own house; of

[1] A term always used wherever the source of a rivulet is.

which however I saw nothing but the room where I was lodged, on the floor of which he caused a bed to be spread, his troublesome civility not allowing my own to be used. This receiving-room for strangers is generally the nearest to the door; and as many strangers as arrive sleep in it. A dish of rice, some soup, or a chicken, is commonly served up for supper, with a cup of coffee and a pipe on arriving, and the same after supper, and this makes up the entertainment of the evening. The master of the house keeps his guests company for an hour or two, and then leaves them to themselves. But, as my visit had his own health for its object, the evening was spent chiefly in conversation with him on this topic.

Next morning I left Yabrûd, accompanied still by Yahyah and by Osman Aga, and, after a ride of five hours, reached Carah. This is a poor and slovenly village. It seems to have formerly had very extensive gardens, but which now lie entirely waste.[1] There is a monastery of Greek caloyers. The situation of Carah is high, and the temperature of the air was many degrees lower than at the place we had come from. As a proof of this, all the houses which I entered had fireplaces, which are not seen at Damascus. There was

[1] Abulfeda speaks of Carah in the following terms:— "Among the noted places is Carah. It is a large village between Damascus and Hems, and serves as a station for caravans. Most of the inhabitants are Christians.

no public bath in the place, and the absence of this very necessary article of cleanliness and religion is always a proof of the meanness of a Mahometan town.

We found in Masûd Aga a laughing, plethoric, unwieldy Turk, who gave himself airs of importance which almost imposed on my simplicity. He desired me to tell Lady Hester that, if she would put herself under his guidance, he would carry her safely to Palmyra; when, as we learned afterwards from the Arabs themselves, he himself did not dare to stir out of his own village for fear of them: and it was the assurance of the insufficiency of any solid protection which he could give that induced the Jews, Yusef and Rafaël, to dissuade us from going at all.

On the 18th, I took my leave of Masûd Aga and Osman Aga, having first taken coffee and a pipe with them. I cannot help expressing the astonishment I felt at observing the continued use that Masûd Aga made of the narkyly, a pipe by which the smoke is inhaled through water in the manner of the hooka; he was never without it for a moment, and it was the employment of one man to prepare it for him.

From Yabrûd towards Carah, the face of the country had assumed a more lonely aspect than hitherto; and, on leaving Carah, I could plainly perceive that we were on the skirts of the desert, if not in it. Cultivation, and the appearance of it, had ceased altogether. To the east of us, the eye wandered over plains bounded only by the horizon. We met few

people, and those we did meet were generally in parties: there was a look of suspicion given and exchanged on both sides, and the *salàm alëikûm* was always muttered in a hollow tone, which, from the whistling of the wind across the desert, was scarcely audible: the ample abah, the kefféya tied over the bottom of the face, leaving, like the vizor of a helmet, the eyes alone visible, the long spear borne on the shoulder, all wore an air of defence and distrust, which rendered me, in spite of myself, thoughtful and cautious. On our left was a chain of barren mountains, which seemed to shut us out from the habitable world. This chain was about four or five miles off, and I conceived it to be a branch of the Antilebanon. At one place, we saw men employed in burning kali, which grows abundantly hereabout.

About two o'clock, we arrived at Hassyah, a village enclosed by a mud wall: it contained a large caravansery and a mosque: a hundred yards from the wall, there was likewise a detached caravansery with a well; but this seemed to be totally neglected. In the middle of the village, there was a large basin, supplied with water from a spring, brought to it in earthenware pipes from without: it was nearly dry just now, and looked like a stagnant pond; so that the water we had to drink was quite foul and bad tasted.

I made use of my *buyurdy*, or pasha's order, with the shaykh of Hassyah, to obtain a better supper

than I thought I should get of the villagers for money: but I was deceived, for I supped on treacle and dûrra bread;—and bread from dûrra, or Indian corn, is worse than that made from oats and barley, and is not to be eaten unless immediately after it is made.

There was a small caravan going the same road with ourselves, and it was thought prudent, for greater safety, to march with it. Accordingly, we departed the next morning, the 19th October, before one o'clock, by the light of the moon, and in the evening we reached Hems.

I was conducted to the house of Mâlem Skender, a gentleman well-known in those days to most English travellers for his hospitality. Yahyah had accompanied me thus far, and I rewarded him with a present of twelve piasters and a half. Mâlem Skender sent a guard forward with me, and about nine o'clock we reached Tel Byssy, a village on an eminence, the houses of which were for the most part exactly in the shape of a sugarloaf, and built of unbaked bricks.

Soon after passing the village of El Rosten, we came to the banks of the river Orontes, called in Arabic El Aâsy, over which is a bridge, with a large caravansery adjoining. The sight of this river, which our earliest studies make so familiar to us by name, caused considerable emotions of pleasure. The river is here about ten yards broad.[1]

[1] Ali Bey says the mean breadth is fifty feet (vid. p. 209, vol. ii.)



BRIDGE OVER THE ORONTES.

Pursuing our route, we passed Ibsarýn, a hamlet with sugarloaf houses. Between the bridge and this hamlet there was a burying-ground, where were many tombstones and one mausoleum. This cemetery was called Kubt el Habázeh. At first, the road was stony, as was generally the soil about it, but afterwards it changed to a fine blackish red mould. At twenty-seven minutes to five, we saw another burying-place called Kubt el Kaireen: we arrived about five in the evening at the gate of Hamah.

I paid my muleteer and dismissed him, and, giving Mâlem Skender's man his present, dismissed him also. He had conducted me to the house of Mâlem Mûsa Koblan, his master's relation, the governor's kateb or secretary, and consequently the chief christian of the place. I was lodged in a room, detached from the house, and in which it was necessary to make a great sweeping

before it could be rendered clean enough to receive me. Some dirty mats were placed on the floor, over these a carpet somewhat broader than a bed-carpet, and a dish of rice was served up for my supper ; but I saw nobody.

When the evening was somewhat advanced, Mâlem Mûsa, who pretended that he was just returned from the governor's, came to see me. He complained of his asthma, grunted at every word he said, hoped I had supped well, and then left me, after having begged me to await Mr. Barker and Mr. B. at Hamah, since they must pass through on their way to Damascus.

In fact, the next day they arrived. Mr. B.'s indisposition had not lasted, and he felt now quite well. Mr. Barker's establishment being equally large with Mr. B.'s, the house, from the quantity of luggage and number of servants, became a scene of great confusion. For his dragoman he had brought with him a young Frenchman, named Beaudin, residing from his fifteenth year at Aleppo, and speaking Arabic almost like a native. Mâlem Mûsa had a son, well known to Mr. Barker, named Selûm, which name he had warped from its original sound into Selim, this last being a Turkish appellation, which Christians are not generally allowed to bear. For Selim was on all occasions very desirous of assuming the garb and air of a Turk ; and his situation in the employ of the governor enabled him to take many liberties of that kind. He was at present from home: but his name will be often mentioned hereafter.

Hamah is a large but straggling city on the Aâsy or Orontes, which may be here from twenty to thirty yards broad. It is built in a bottom between two hills. There is a conical mound, evidently the work of human hands, upon which once stood a citadel, although now one stone is not left on another. Nor could this elevation, since the invention of cannon, have served for defence, as its highest part is only on a level with the downs which surround the city. The streets are filthy and stinking both in winter and summer; and, as they are not paved, the winter rains render them almost impassable; so that here I beheld, what I believe is not seen in any other country, men of all ranks walking from house to house in clogs, such as brewers' men wear in England, but much higher.

At the corner of a private house I observed a stone let into the wall, with figures and hieroglyphics upon it; but my interpreter had given me to understand that much curiosity would be excited if I were seen drawing it, with some danger to my person, and I therefore merely mention its existence there to invite other travellers to examine it, now that the Syrians are become more civilized than formerly.

The wheels used for raising water from the bed of the river, are among the greatest curiosities in Hamah. They are of that kind called Persian wheels, and are of a bold, although rude, construction. One is said to be sixty feet in diameter. An adventurous fellow was accustomed to make the circuit of this wheel,

holding by the extremity of one of the spokes, and to undergo the dip through the water. The 41st question of Michaelis relates to the word دولاب, which I believe to mean water-wheels, such as here described. To the circumference are fastened leathern buckets or earthenware pots, which fill from below, and, as the wheel goes round, empty themselves at the highest point into aqueducts raised on arcades. By these the water is carried inland, and the grounds are irrigated, for all the purposes of gardening and husbandry.

The houses of the poor are of mud and unbaked bricks: those of the rich are of stone, and, for the most part, built in the form of vaulted chambers. Many of these rooms have no windows, the light being admitted by the door only, which it is scarcely necessary to keep shut in the coldest season of the year: whilst, by these means, a degree of coolness is preserved in the summer heats not attainable in any other manner. There is one trifling inconvenience which arises from this mode of excluding the light. In the middle of the day, when the glare of the sun is almost intolerable, on entering these rooms, one seems for a moment in total darkness. I cannot but suppose that this sudden abstraction of light must in some degree enfeeble the organs of vision. Hamah, indeed, like Damascus, abounds in one-eyed and blind people.

The dress of the poor female inhabitants may be said to consist of four pieces; the veil, the gown, the shift, and the apron. The veil is green, the gown

blue, and the apron red. This costume, on a pretty woman, looks well. The veil is drawn so as to form an oval outline on the face, falling over the shoulders down to the middle.

As Hamah lies on the high road from Aleppo to Damascus, and is constantly exposed to the passage of troops, among whom, in addition to a very relaxed discipline, obtains the custom of quartering themselves at will in the towns through which they march, the inhabitants have been taught by experience that even their saloons might on such occasions be converted into stables. Hence a usage which is very general here, and more especially in the Christian houses, of making the street doorway no more than from three to four feet high, so that a horse or mule cannot enter. Indeed, it requires much stooping for even a man to do so: and when, on my arrival at Hamah, I was led, through a filthy lane, down a blind alley to the door of Mâlem Mûsa's house, I could not persuade myself that I was entering a respectable habitation.

From the low situation of the city, the air is bad, and autumnal diseases are here often very fatal, always very common; but the climate is mild beyond measure in the winter. Seen from the neighbouring hills, Hamah presents one of the most beautiful prospects I ever beheld, arising from the joint effect of the windings of the river through the straggling streets, the noble arcades, the great wheels, and the rich foliage of its orchards.

The chief manufacture of the place is that of sheep-skin pelisses, which are worn by the Bedouin Arabs and by the people of the villages on the skirts of the Desert. Printed muslin handkerchiefs, felt for saddle-covers, silk napkins for covering the waist in the bath, and silk handkerchiefs, are likewise made here. The town is famous also for towels and napkins, in appearance like huckaback.

There are about fifty families of the Greek church, who, with the Syrians, comprehend all the Christians. These, generally speaking, are subjected to more humiliations here than on the coast; for they are always in awe of a licentious soldiery, and are never permitted to wear any other coloured clothes than blue, black, or what we call quakers' colours. The Greeks have a bishop, or *despotes*.

The river is liable to great inundations in the winter season, which sometimes rise as high as the top of the parapet of the bridge which joins the streets and suburbs on the right and left bank. It produces fine fish. The valley in which the river runs is not wide; and, where it is bounded on the left side by almost perpendicular ascents to the downs overlooking the town, the poorer inhabitants have made themselves caves, in which, to appearance at least, fifty families had taken up their abode. Hamah would make a most beautiful panorama.

Mr B. was desirous of visiting the ruins of Bâlbec, and therefore he and Mr. Barker departed on

the following morning. I accompanied them only as far as Hems, where they left me to return to Damascus by the way I came. This I was obliged to do, as I had to seek out a European gentleman, who was said to be living in obscurity at a village close by Yabrûd, and concerning whom Lady Hester was curious to learn some particulars. Mâlem Skender received us in his house, and the next morning my companions set off for Bâlbec. The weather had been much colder at Hamah than at Damascus, for I found myself obliged to buy a lamb-skin pelisse, which proved of great comfort to me; and on this day it rained, being the first wet we had had since the month of May.

Hems is the ancient Emesa. It is a neat, compact town,[1] with streets paved, and wider than is customary in Turkey. It contains fourteen or fifteen mosques, and is about a mile and a half in circumference. It is said to contain 15,000 souls, about 300 of whom are Christians. Just outside the town there is a ruinous piece of ancient masonry, square at the base, which is surmounted by a pyramid. It has probably served for a mausoleum. The pyramid was

[1] Abulfeda quotes Ebn Hokal, who says that "Hems is placed in a most fertile plain, and that it is more healthy than any part of the district of Damascus: he adds that neither serpents nor scorpions are found there . . . . . Not quite a mile from the town runs the river Maklûb, or Oront, and upon its banks are orchards and vineyards."

supported by pilasters, and the frieze shows the remains of the festoons which once ornamented it. On one side is an inscription, which was too high to be read by me. This mausoleum contained two chambers, one over the other, with small windows. It is built of brick, and faced with gray stones, lozenge-shaped.

Without the walls, also, is the tomb of Khaled Sayf Allah, one of Mahomet's first disciples, his relation, and the conqueror of Syria. In riding out on the 26th, I was tempted to try the experiment of passing for a Turk; and, dismounting from my horse at the door of the mosque, I walked boldly in, and requested to see Khaled's tomb, which is an object of great veneration to those who perform pilgrimages to the shrine. My bad Arabic went for nothing; for the doorkeeper had only to suppose me to be an Albanian, or some native of the European provinces of Turkey. I saw the tomb, which, similar to other Mahometan tombs of ancient date, was shaped like the roof of a house. He gave me some holy water to drink, and threw over me a veil, or scarf, during which ceremony he pronounced a long prayer, whilst I felt somewhat alarmed at the risk I ran in assuming a feigned character. In going out, the unusual present which I gave him of two piasters and a half was enough to betray me; for a devout Mussulman probably never exceeded twenty paras, or half a piaster.

I visited the citadel of the town, which seemed to

have been the work of the Saracens, or crusaders, but was now altogether in ruins. It stood on a truncated mound, the sides of which were faced with neat gray stone from top to bottom. Round it was a ditch from twenty to thirty yards broad, with a counterscarp faced also in stone. On the table of the eminence there appeared the remains of a series of vaults that had gone round the circumference of the citadel, and communicated with each other by small doors. There had been towers at equal distances. Fragments of granite and stone pillars were lying about, and in one place some of these were let into the walls.

On approaching Hems, when coming from Damascus, the rising sun was reflected strongly on a lake, to the left of the road, formed by the waters of the Orontes, not far from where it takes its rise. As I proposed remaining a day or two at Hems, I resolved to visit it, and for the value of eighteen pence a guide conducted me thither.

After passing through Katâny, a miserable village, not unlike a nest of hogsties in England, and about half a mile from the lake, I soon reached the margin of the water, and beheld before me an expanse, apparently about three miles across in its broadest part, but in most places less, and about twelve long, or perhaps much more; for a sheet of water is liable to deceive the eye greatly.[1] It narrows at the Eastern extremity, where

[1] "The lake Cades is from north to south almost the third part of a day's journey: and its breadth is that of the mound,

I was, and is banked in by a dyke about a quarter of a mile long,[1] appearing not of very ancient construction, although Abulfeda attributes it to Alexander the Great. I walked on the dyke, and the first outlet for the waters that presented itself was a small stream that I had crossed in my way: then came the mouth of the aqueduct for supplying Hems. This aqueduct is of rough workmanship, and it seems to have been constructed in the place of one now dilapidated, but of equally indifferent construction. But, from the sight of this aqueduct and the elevation of the embankment, it may be concluded that the object, or the principal object, of it was to raise water to a sufficient height to enable it to flow to Hems.

At the northern extremity of the dyke stands a ruined tower, and, between it and the aqueduct, about half way, the lake runs over, and falls down in cascades to form the river Orontes. A meadow beneath the dyke, and much below the level of the lake, shows where once the waters ran unchecked: a small mulberry plantation now occupies its place. Wild fig trees grew out of fissures of the dyke. Close to the tower a small aqueduct commences, by which a village two hundred yards off is supplied with water. Under the dyke,

which was built, to the north, (as is reported) by Alexander, and which is 1287 cubits long, and 18 in thickness. Were this mound destroyed, the lake would cease to be. There are fish in the lake."—(Abulfeda, p. 157.) Ebn Abd el Hak gives a breadth of four miles.

[1] Abulfeda says 965 yards, or more than half a mile long.

and at the foot of the *tel* or mount, are many loose stones, but none of them seemed to be of a Grecian or Roman character: nor were there any fragments of pillars or of buildings of ancient date.

I returned to Hems much pleased with my excursion, having first followed the course of the Orontes for some distance, until I came to a very large Persian waterwheel, and a mill; both put in motion by the stream, which was nearly dammed across to give it a greater impetus. This place was called El Memas, and here are the gardens of Hems, which, for want of water for irrigation, cannot thrive close to the town. But this, although a privation, contributes greatly to the salubrity of the place, the air of which is much superior to that of Hamah.

Having seen everything worthy of curiosity at Hems, I left it on the 28th of October, accompanied by the same man as guide who had before conducted me from Hems to Hamah.

Here I staid the whole of the 30th, in consequence of the marching of some troops. The inhabitants were apprised of the coming of these troops, who were a corps of Deláti, mercenaries in the pay of Hamed Bey: and, from the conversation of the villagers, I could easily perceive that their passage was exceedingly dreaded. I therefore requested Masûd Aga to grant me a soldier, to remain at my door and protect me from insult. He candidly told me that his soldiers could do nothing at such a moment, when

even his own house would be scarcely exempt from intrusion. I therefore resolved to depend on my own scheming. I dressed myself in my smartest clothes, with a cashmere shawl round my head and one round my waist, girded on my sabre with its silver scabbard, and, seating myself in the corner of the cottage, on my travelling carpet, I assumed an air of importance as great as I could put on. My host, I had observed, had removed out of the way every thing that could serve as fuel or food, and then went out, leaving the soldiers to expend their fury on the bare walls; "for, if they get hold of me," he said, "it will be in vain to declare that I have nothing to give them: they will beat me until I produce my all."

About ten o'clock, I heard the noise of horses and the clamour of many voices. Presently a soldier alighted at my door, and said—"Holloa, rascal; come here and take my horse:" then, thrusting his head in, and seeing me seated, he begged my pardon and moved on to the next cottage. Another came; I kept my seat, and telling him "This is my house, friend," he too went away. A third and a fourth presented themselves, and fortunately no one, in the hurry of the moment, discovered me to be a Frank. My groom Ibrahim was of great service, who, leaning negligently against the outer door, told every one not to enter or shout so, as there was an Aga within.

The troops merely baited at Carah, and then went for Hassiah: and the rest of the day was employed

by the cottagers in replacing their furniture, and lamenting the hardships to which they were subjected from such a lawless soldiery.

On the 31st I went from Carah to Yabrûd, where I took up my lodging at an old Christian's house. The man was a farrier, and, being ill, had entreated Osman Aga, if I passed through again, to billet me upon him: so that I had an importunate patient, labouring under asthma, close at my elbow.

I amused myself, on Sunday, Nov. 2nd, in a ride towards the springs that supply the brook by which the gardens of Yabrûd are irrigated. At twenty minutes' distance from the gate of the town, there are two of them, both gushing from the foot of a rock: and, just before reaching them, there is a sarcophagus, hewn out of a mass of rock, and covered by a huge lid, having had on it two circular reliefs sculptured, but now indistinct. The valley is highly cultivated, [1] and terminates, beyond the farthest spring, by a small meadow, where the two chains of mountains approach to within a hundred yards of each other.

My landlord, the farrier, having said much about the curious excavations in the rocks at a village called Mâlûla, I induced him, the next day but one, which

[1] Ali Bey, (p. 275) speaking of the neighbourhood of Damascus, says, "The labourers or villagers in general are in easy circumstances . . . if, under these burthens, this class of people are rich, what would they be under a just and liberal government?"

was the 4th, to accompany me thither. On reaching the place, my conductor took me to a small monastery, built on the brow of the precipice, which overhangs the bogáz or ravine in which the village stands. On the rock where we were, and in those rocks which to the right and left were still overtopping us, are numerous grottoes cut out of the solid stone. In the ravine beneath is the village: and, beyond it, we looked over the Desert as far as the eye could reach. I was eager to enter some of these grottoes, and did then for the first time believe in the stories of the troglodytes: for many of them had evidently been inhabited; and some of them showed for what purposes they had been used, as for wine-pressing, baking, sleeping, &c. Yet a little reflection told me that they originally must have been intended for sepulchres only: inasmuch as many of them contained sarcophagi, like similar caverns that I had seen elsewhere: and in those that had them not, it was not difficult to imagine that they had been disfigured and enlarged for the purposes of pressing oil and wine, or had been converted into magazines after they had ceased to serve as sepulchres.

We were very civilly received at the convent by Mâlem Michael Rasáti, a native of Damascus, sent hither to collect money for Mâlem Rafaël the Jew, to whom the village belonged: *i.e.* who, for a certain sum, farmed it from the pasha, to make of it as much as he could by his exactions. Persons, so sent, live

on the people of the village until they have completed the collection of the imposts. He had with him his wife and sister, who, as being in a retired Christian village, enjoyed themselves with nearly as much liberty in their walks and amusements as ladies in England would do. Soon after my arrival we dined,[1] drank our coffee, and smoked our pipes: and, whilst Mâlem Rasáti took his afternoon nap, I revisited the excavations. In several there were remains of mouldings and other ornaments in bas-relief, and some appeared to have been stuccoed. About four o'clock we all walked down into the village. A spring from the hills above, carried by a grooved ledge down the ravine, supplied the inhabitants with water. A large shady tree or two afforded them shelter from the rays of the meridian sun, which, when declined from the perpendicular, are shut out by the high precipices on either side. Upon the whole, I would recommend the traveller in Syria to turn from his road to visit Mâlûla. The *summag* or *sumak* tree, the leaves of which are used in dyeing, is much cultivated on this spot, and some of the sepulchres were converted into store-rooms for holding them.

Mâlem Rasâti urged me strongly to remain all night, in which my landlord, who found his *raki*, or

[1] Of the dishes was one for which, whilst in Syria, I always retained a great liking. It is sour milk curdled, called leben, into which cucumber is cut, with grated mint leaves sprinkled on the surface.

brandy, good, joined him: so that, when nothing I could say would persuade them to let me go, I stole out unperceived, bridled my horse, and rode off alone, although not sure of the way. I had not, however, got a mile when my landlord came galloping after me; and could not refrain, when he had overtaken me, from muttering a great deal about the obstinacy of Franks, and of the folly of riding after it was dark. We reached Yabrûd in safety.

Within a few miles of Yabrûd is Nebk, a small village, where resided a person whom Lady Hester wished me to seek out. His name was Lascaris, and his history is singular. He considered himself a descendant of Lascaris, emperor of Trebizond: but, not to go so far back, his uncle was Grand Master of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem at Malta, and of the Piedmontese family of Lascaris de Ventimiglia. He himself was a knight, and one of those, who, after the capitulation of the Island of Malta, followed General Buonaparte into Egypt. He then held a post of considerable emolument as receiver of imposts; and, being an ardent favourer of universal fraternization, he married a Georgian slave, who had belonged to the harým of a kashef of Murad Bey. She was stolen from Georgia at the age of fifteen, and pretended that she never had changed her religion.

The history of her bondage, as related to me by herself, may, if true, serve to give an idea how slaves are carried off from the countries which supply the

market of Turkey. She was walking from the village of Warran, her native place, to an adjoining town, when, in an unfrequented part of the road, five men sprang out from an ambush and seized her. They stuffed her mouth with a pocket handkerchief, and carried her to a retired cottage in the mountains near at hand. A master of a merchant vessel awaited them, to take off whatever prey they might make; and, her price being settled, she was conveyed to the seaside, and embarked. Until they reached the sea, they always travelled by night, and by day remained concealed in unfrequented places, at which time they tied her by the leg, but otherwise treated her well. She was transported to Constantinople, but, the market being dull, was re-embarked for Grand Cairo. Mohammed Kashef bought her; and his harým being dispersed after the defeats of the Mamelukes by the French, she fell into the hands of the Chevalier Lascaris, who married her. She was a large masculine woman: she seemed to have been handsome, but her beauty was now gone; for, in these climates, women at thirty are in their wane.

On the evacuation of Egypt, M. Lascaris took his wife to Paris; but her manners and education were so little adapted to the society of the French capital, that, after an exhibition of her shawls, her Turkish dress, and the few novelties she had to show, the lady found herself out of her sphere, and, we may suppose, worried her husband to return to a country where she

could meet with people like herself. The aunt of M. Lascaris was *dame d'atour* to the Empress Josephine;[1] and, for this or some other reason, he aspired to a post of importance, which not being able to obtain (for it is said he rejected with disdain that of sous-prefet of a department), his own dudgeon, joined with his wife's, induced him to depart for Constantinople. They there planned a journey into Georgia, to her native place, where M. Lascaris, who was extremely visionary, proposed civilizing the inhabitants and introducing a new system of agriculture. An Armenian, who found out that the projector had a good deal of money at his disposal, undertook to conduct his affairs, to provide articles of barter, implements of agriculture, &c. They embarked together on the Black Sea, landed in the Crimea, and were proceeding on their way to Georgia, when they were arrested as French spies, by the Russians; and, the Armenian having plundered and deserted them, M. Lascaris and his wife were conveyed as prisoners to Petersburg, with the loss of the greatest part of their fortune.

[1] Mention is made of this lady in the Memoirs of Buonaparte, published by Las Cases, vol. 3, part v., p. 148.

"The Emperor said that he renewed at Turin, in the person of Madame de Lascaris, the gracious gallantry exercised at Troyes; and that, in both instances, he had reason to be gratified with the fruits of his liberality. The two families gave every proof of attachment and gratitude."

Their innocence being proved, they were set at liberty. I forget what next became of them, but gradually M. Lascaris frittered away all that he possessed, and, in 1811, became a school and music-master at Aleppo. I recollect, however, that one of his intermediate schemes was a copartnership with the shaykh of a village near Latakia, where he proposed to raise double crops from the soil by the use of European agricultural instruments, &c. He had not been long there when some unguarded expressions on politics caused his intentions to be suspected; and, had he not retired in haste to Latakia, he would probably have been the victim of the suspicions of the natives. At the time when, as will be presently related, I found him at Nebk, he had just come from Aleppo with a bale or two of red cotton stuffs, which he hoped to sell to the women of the neighbouring villages for petticoats and aprons, at a great profit, and thus make his fortune.

On the 3rd of November, according to my instructions, I rode over to the village of Nebk. On entering it, I inquired for the house of the bishop, to which I had been directed. As I went up the street, a girl about twelve years old, looking out at a door, stared very hard at me. I repeated the question as to the bishop's residence, when she immediately begged me to stop, and called her master. It was the servant girl of M. Lascaris himself, who, on her calling him, came to the door in a peasant's dress. He wore a

striped black and white woollen abah, in shape like the coats of Robin Hood's days: beneath it a pair of loose, blue cotton Turkish brogues, no stockings, and peasants' red shoes. His beard was long and very handsome, his turban like that of the peasantry.

I made myself known to him, dismounted, and was introduced to his wife, who, with her own hand, set about preparing some coffee. They occupied a small cottage, with a yellow clay floor, polished until it shone like a looking-glass: and everything in the room was arranged with great neatness.

I spent two most agreeable days with them. M. Lascaris was a man whose conversation was always particularly pleasing, and, as far as regarded the fine arts, very instructive: for he had seen and read a great deal. The consciousness of his own superior merit was perhaps the cause of all his misfortunes, in having made him lay claim to higher offices in the state than he could obtain: and hence, assuming the tone of an injured man, he had irretrievably embroiled himself with the Emperor Napoleon.[1]

[1] For farther information respecting this extraordinary man, the reader is referred to the "Souvenirs de l'Orient," of M. de Lamartine. What Lady Hester first thought of him may be gathered from an extract of a letter she wrote to a friend.

"I have met with an extraordinary character here, Monsieur Lascaris de Vintimille. He is certainly flighty, but has considerable talents, and a perfect knowledge of the Arabic language; he is extremely poor, and very active. Should he fall

At the close of the second day, I received a letter to hasten my return to Damascus, Mr. Barker having arrived there very ill. On the 5th of November, I quitted Nebk for Yabrûd, where I left some medicines and a small recompense with my host, the farrier; and, on the 6th, I departed for Damascus. I slept on the road at Marra, and arrived at Damascus on the 7th, after an absence of twenty-five days.

into the hands of the French, we might in future have reason to repent it; at present he is quite English, and it might be worth while to keep him so. In the *Chancellerie de l'ordre de Malte*, and likewise in the hands of l'avocat Torrigiani, are all the papers which refer to his family and to his *humble claims*, which are merely a little pension that he may have bread to eat—he does not look to more. Now you are settling the affairs of this kind, it might be worth while to consider and represent this subject to government, as it would ensure them an agent in parts where few persons could live—I mean upon the borders of the desert; and I can assure you, this in future would be of great importance; for the Arabs are now so strong, as hardly to be managed by the pashas; besides, it would be a great act of humanity to a once great man. The French are sending agents in all directions (at an immense expense) into the desert, and why do not we do the same?"

CHAPTER III.

Precautions against riots—Emir Nasar visits Lady Hester —He dissuades her from going to Palmyra with an escort—Description of Nasar—How entertained—Lady Hester quits Damascus—Reports of her wealth—She takes Monsieur and Madame Lascaris with her—Her interview with the Emir Mahannah—She arrives at Hamah—Departure of Mr. B. and Mr. Barker from Damascus—The Messieurs Bertrand dismissed—Bills of exchange—The Author sets out for Hamah —Mode of travelling—A Caravansery—Gabriel, the poet—Kosair—Kelyfy—Nebk—Turkish adventurer—Khan of Nebk —Mode of washing in the East—Carah—Hassiah—Hamah —The Author lodges with Monsieur and Madame Lascaris—Opportunity for entering the Desert—M. Lascaris resolves to accompany the Author—Bedouin costume—First departure from Hamah.

Mr. Barker had been seized with a bilious remittent fever:—the danger was over, but he was very weak and exhausted. He and Mr. B. were lodged in the Christian quarter, in the house which Lady Hester had rejected. As I was necessarily obliged to go frequently from one house to the other, and sometimes late at night, I had occasion to observe the precautions taken in Turkish cities after sunset to prevent nocturnal disturbances. The end of every street has

a gate, which is shut at the prayer (called namàz el ashy) two hours after sunset, and a patrol is in attendance at each. To pass these gates, I was obliged sometimes to knock and wait from five to fifteen minutes; when a lazy soldier of the police, rising from his mustaby[1] and putting down his pipe with the utmost slowness and indifference, would let me through, taking care to question me whence I came and whither I was going, and to arrest me if without a lantern. To a medical man, no other impediment is given; but to persons without ostensible business—to an artisan or mechanic—the passage from street to street at an advanced hour in the night would be difficult. After ten o'clock, I seldom have seen a living creature out of doors, excepting dogs, whose night haunts are not disturbed with impunity, as they follow the intruder snarling and barking from one extremity of the street to the other.

Towards the middle of October, Lady Hester had in part made the necessary arrangements for her journey to Palmyra; but, during my absence, Nasar, the son of Mahamah, emir of the Anizys,[2] had, in

[1] A mustaby is a piece of solid masonry, about as high as, and twice the breadth of, a bench, built generally at the street-doors of houses for men to sit on and smoke, or wait, or sleep.

[2] So the tribes of the Bedouins are collectively called which range the desert in the rear of the midland part of Syria, leading to Palmyra.

consequence of the letter sent to his father, been to see her ladyship.

When he was introduced to her presence, he said that "he had heard of her intention of going, under the protection of a body of troops, to Tadmûr; and that he came from his father to warn her against such a step; for, if she attempted to force her way thither, he considered himself at liberty to treat her and her escort as he did all those who presumed to cross the desert without his permission—namely, as enemies." He declared to her that "if so distinguished a person as she was would place herself under the protection of the Bedouins, and rely upon their honour, they would pledge themselves for conducting her in safety thither and back; but that, if she chose any other way, she would learn to her cost who was sultan in those wilds." He added—"soldiers of the cities know not the tracks and landmarks of the desert;—where the wells are—what parts are infested with hostile tribes—who is friendly and who is not; and, when they have led you into difficulties, they will be the first to desert you."

Many other reasons he no doubt gave, which, joined to his natural eloquence, could not fail to convince. For he was a young man of very fine talents, as we had afterwards many opportunities of observing; and, when bidding Lady Hester to repose confidence in him and his father, he knew how to inspire it. He was now about twenty-five years of age, plain in his

person, but dignified, eloquent, and of the most engaging manners. A description of his dress will not much bespeak the admiration of a European reader. He was clad in a sheepskin pelisse, much in the shape of a sailor's long sea-jacket; under this he wore a ragged satin robe that reached to his ancles, with a sort of green and orange silk handkerchief thrown over his head, and tied with a cord for a fillet. He was without stockings. His attendants were in a worse plight than himself, and stood around him.

Nasar was entertained by her ladyship with an appropriate repast prepared for him and his people, in which there was a mixture of Turkish and English cookery under the direction of Pierre, now become a man of great use in Lady Hester's establishment. The plum-puddings excited much laughter and astonishment among them;—but they could not be induced to eat of them.

Lady Hester presented him with a complete suit of clothes, which he immediately distributed among his people, telling her that a Bedouin prince was the father of his subjects, and that what he got was for his children.

The result of Nasar's visit was that her ladyship declined the offer of troops from the pasha to protect her, dismissed all those whom she had partly engaged for the journey, and, availing herself of Mr. Barker's illness, on whom I remained to attend, and with whom civility required Mr. B.'s stay, she departed

alone, as she said, for Hamah, on the 15th of November.

The following letter, written by Lady Hester herself the day before her departure, explains her own feelings at this time:—

Lady Hester Stanhope to ——.

Damascus, November 14, 1812.

My dear ——,

B. and Mr. Barker arrived here about the first; the latter has been laid up with a fever ever since, and I have given up my journey to the desert for the present, as the Pasha insists upon sending 800 or 1,000 men with me, and the expense would be ruin; but I am going off to Homs to-morrow, and in the course of the winter shall contrive to go in some way or other.

It seems very cross to be angry at people being anxious about you; but had B. and Mr. B. made less fuss about my safety, and let me have had perfectly my own way, I should have been returned by this time from Palmyra. Yet I cannot but regret it; (for I had leave to dig and do every thing I pleased at Palmyra): chance having put such extraordinary power in my hands, it has been lost by mismanagement. It is not here as in other parts of the world; if you only go a mile to the right instead of the left, which you have not previously bargained to do, your camels leave you, your guards won't stir out of their district, you must pay them four times their price to induce them to go on, &c. Therefore, it was very fine and very natural to write, every three days from Aleppo, "we will meet here, then there," and to make fifty changes, and to express fifty fears:—from people who did not know the country it might be expected, but those who did ought to have been aware it would have been taken advantage of, which has been the case.

We have no plague here at present, but I suppose it will come when goods arrive from Constantinople. I, for one, have little apprehensions of the plague; all in this world rests with Providence, and over-caution ever exposes persons more to danger than remaining quiet.

I have just sent to Sayda for the things Captain Hope forwarded me from Smyrna; I trust I shall find all my packets of letters with them. I have sought in vain for some good thing to send you from hence, but can find nothing; but I have ordered some wild-boar hams to be made, which you will receive in the course of the winter. I should feel so ungrateful were I not to think of you constantly, even in little matters. B. ordered some of the famous Vino d'Oro, of Mount Lebanon; when the casks are well seasoned, and an opportunity offers, it shall be sent to Malta. B. desires to be most kindly remembered to you; he hates this place, as I thought he would, but must remain here till Mr. Barker is well enough to set off. Aleppo he also thought abominable. I knew I should dislike Aleppo if I went there, because it is full of vulgar people: but here there are chiefly great Turks, and, as I get on very well with them, I rather like the place than otherwise, but think it very unwholesome from the quantity of water and trees in and about the town; however, it is very beautiful in its way, but it is not the way I like. Brusa and the banks of the Bosphorus for me!—enchanting scenes which I think upon with delight. But I must not write on for ever, I forget all the business you have upon your hands: may your health not suffer from it is all I pray.

Yours ever, most sincerely,

H. L. S.

I scribble sadly, but my ink is so bad, and I have no table; the Turks always write upon their hand, and so slow—it is quite amusing!

Previous to her going, I gave her an account of my visit to M. and Madame Lascaris, and excited in her a great desire to see them. In the mean time the report had spread in the Desert that an English princess, who rode on a mare worth forty purses, with housings and stirrups of gold, and for whom the treasurer of the English sultan told out every day 1000 sequins, was about to pay a visit to Tadmûr; that she had in her possession a book which instructed her where treasures were to be found (this book was the plates of Wood and Dawkins); and that she had a small bag of leaves of a certain herb which could transmute antique stones into gold.

Lady Hester did certainly take the road to Hamah, but, unknown to us all, she had arranged a meeting with Nasar's father, and was determined to enter the Desert alone, and thus give the Emir Mahannah a proof of her reliance on his honour. So, as she told us afterwards, going as far as Nebk, she there induced M. Lascaris and his wife immediately to dispose of their goods and whatever incumbrances they had, and to accompany her in the capacity of interpreters. She then turned off from the high road, at Tel Bysy, a hamlet near Hems, plunged into the Desert, under the guidance of a single Bedouin sent for that purpose, and trusted herself, a solitary and unprotected woman, to hordes of robbers, whose livelihood is the plunder they make, and whose exploits are numbered by the travellers they have despoiled. Arrived at Mahannah's

tent, her courage and demeanour struck that prince with astonishment. "I know you are a robber," she said, on their first interview, "and that I am now in your power; but I fear you not; and I have left all those behind who were offered to me as a safeguard, and all my countrymen who could be considered as my protectors, to show you that it is you and your people whom I have chosen as such." Mutually pleased with each other, after a short interview Mahannah escorted her ladyship to within a few miles of Hamah, and, commissioning his son to conduct her safe to the residence prepared for her in that city, they then parted.

In the mean time, Mr. B. and Mr. Barker, who had recovered from his indisposition, about the 24th of November, followed Lady Hester to Hamah. I remained behind, anxious to receive some boxes and packets of letters said to be arrived at Acre from England, and for which I had despatched an express messenger to that place. I hired a small house belonging to Mâlem Hanah Takhal, and divided my time between Ahmed Bey, M. Chaboceau and the Greek archbishop, taking the opportunity of visiting whatever I had neglected to see before in this beautiful city.

On the departure of Lady Hester from Damascus, the two Messieurs Bertrand were dismissed. As one of them had to return to Sayda, he rode a horse of Lady Hester's, which was sent back by the messenger, who

brought with him the boxes and letters that were expected. Having now nothing to detain me at Damascus, I took leave of my friends there as of persons I might never see again.

I had received from Hamah a bill of exchange on Ibrahim Aga, a creditable Damascus merchant, dealer in red caps, for one thousand piasters, in order to make some purchases; but the extreme caution of the old man, and the time he took to collect the money, delayed me yet longer: for the Mahometan merchants are not used to negotiate bills as persons do in England, and trade is generally carried on by barter or by hard cash.

I made a contract with one Hossayn Shakády to carry all my luggage to Hamah, for forty *ikliks*, or one hundred piasters. On the 7th of December I left the city of Damascus. I was now equipped in a very different manner from what I had been when I entered it. I had altered my dress entirely, and had assumed that of the Syrian Mahometans, one principal feature of which is the abah, or long cloak, made of woollen stuff, which hangs, without sleeves, from the shoulders. Instead of my bed, I provided myself with a small carpet of the size of a hearth-rug, on which I proposed to sleep without undressing. I discharged my servant Yusef, a hypocritical fellow, who, from having lived as cook in the Franciscan convent of Damascus, was as demure, and at the same time as great

a cheat, as such an education could possibly make him.[1]

I departed in company with a caravan of about sixty mules and camels, most of them destined for Aleppo. I was furnished with a *buyurdy*, or government order, for my supply on my journey with food and provender for myself, horses, and servant. I was now therefore no longer an English traveller, but, both in garb and usages, endeavoured to conform to the customs of the natives; and, whilst in the East, I never afterwards quitted them. I will therefore describe this method of travelling, that the reader may understand how wide the difference is between Turkey and his own country.

My equipment consisted of the clothes on my back; a halter and a corn-bag for my horse, tied behind my groom; a pair of common woollen saddle-bags under me; my sabre by my side, and my pipe carried by my servant. The mode of journeying was this: we mounted at sunrise, and, proceeding always at a foot-pace, halted somewhere at noon, and generally, if possible, near a spring. There the horses drank, and a little chopped straw was put into their bags: often for

[1] It may be worth mentioning that a servant, whom I employed for a few days at Damascus, was a poet, and had written many verses, some of which Shaykh Ibrahim (Mr. Burckhardt) bought as specimens of modern Arabic poetry. There are no Mecænases at Damascus, or it may be he was no Horace, for he was in great poverty.

myself bread and dried figs were all that was served for a breakfast; and a little dried dung (for in this part of the country there is not a bit of wood), scraped together, made fire enough to boil a cup of coffee. Remounted, we generally contrived to arrive before or soon after sunset at a caravansery; and for the last half hour there would be some contention between the fastest walking horses to get beforehand, in order to secure the best corner of the stable, or to obtain the best lodging.

Caravanseries are buildings of a quadrangular form, with no windows outwards, and no outlet but the gate, which is made strong enough to resist any nocturnal attack from Arabs and other robbers. The interior presents generally a very filthy court, with perhaps a well or basin in the middle, and around it an arcade, with the arches open, or walled up half way. The floor is the ground, not often bare, as being most usually covered with the dung of cattle. In a caravansery the traveller is not certain of finding anything. The peasants, perhaps, of some adjoining village, expose to sale barley-bread, figs, raisins, a species of wheat-meal to make gruel, straw, and sometimes, but not always, coffee, with tobacco and tombàk for smoking. About ninepence buys provisions for rider and horse. He ties up his animal, gives him his barley in the corn-bag; then, supping on fresh bread and a dish of rice, a few dried raisins, a cup of coffee and a pipe, he lies down, with his carpet for his

bed, and his saddle-bags for a pillow. His horse sleeps with his saddle on, as in Turkey it is never thought safe to take it off when travelling in the winter season, excepting at sunrise for five minutes, just to air the horse's back, and afford an opportunity of currying him a little. At sunrise, or before, the caravan renews the journey as on the preceding day ; the traveller has nothing to pay for his lodging, goes through the same routine, and finds at night another caravansery to rest in.

The reader will consider all this as very uncomfortable ; but let him recollect the difference which climate makes, and he will find that for nine months in the year the weather invites to sleep in the open air in preference to enclosed rooms. In the latitude I now was in, December is often milder than the June of England.

The road which the caravan took was not the same by which I had gone the first time, but inclined more to the eastward. As we departed late from Damascus, a halt was made at Kosayr, where we slept, within a very short distance of Damascus, for the purpose of awaiting and of collecting together the different merchants and travellers who were to make up the caravan. On the morrow we left Kosayr, and proceeded to Ketayfy. Not choosing to avail myself of the *buyurdy*, I had caused Ibrahim to purchase such things as were necessary for myself and the horses ; but the head *muker*, or *makairy* (such is the name muleteers bear in

Arabic), had been on business to the shaykh of the village, and the bare mention that I was physician to the meleky, or queen, as he called Lady Hester, who had passed so recently, brought down a peremptory invitation that I must go up and sup with him. Accordingly, I went, and found a Turk (not a Syrian Mahometan, for there is a wide distinction between them) of great breeding and civility, who seemed highly impressed with Lady Hester's importance; nor did he interrupt his questions about her except to eat. His servant, a respectable-looking young man, of about twenty-two, who stood waiting submissively before him to serve our pipes, and who put the supper on the table, after all were seated, sat down with us. This is one of the patriarchal customs of the East.

On the 9th we reached Nebk. During the day, a military-looking gentleman belonging to our caravan, well mounted and armed, who had probably heard something of the shaykh's civility to me on the preceding night, showed himself very adroit in courting my acquaintance, and constantly rode by my side, pointing out the objects of curiosity that presented themselves. As we approached Nebk, he asked me where I should lodge; and I told him in the caravansery. "Well, but have you no buyurdy?" I told him I had. "Then why not use it?" he said, "and let me accompany you to see to your lodgings: you need only say I am your guard. You have authority to demand good entertainment, and I will take care it

shall be provided." To this I objected, and was unwilling to let him go with me to the shaykh's; but, when we arrived at Nebk, he clung to me with such an air of assurance that I did not know how to get rid of him. On presenting myself to the shaykh, he immediately ordered rations of barley for the horses to be given to us, and desired one of his people to conduct us to the bishop's, where he said we were to lodge. He did not ask me if the Turkish officer was of my party; but, concluding him to be so, bade him accompany me.

I was angry with my own forbearance, when, on presenting myself to the venerable Syrian bishop, whom I had known on my former visit to Nebk, I saw, mixed with the hearty welcome he gave me, many a side glance of timidity and distress at my companion, who, the moment he entered, began to put himself at his ease, like officers on a march, by throwing off his accoutrements, asking for coffee, &c. My groom had warned me on the road that I should not suffer this man, who, he said, looked like an adventurer, to be too familiar with me: and I fully saw the propriety of his warning now that it was too late. The bishop gave me a good supper. He told me that the English princess had stopped at the village a whole day, and that she had taken away with her Abu Hanah and his wife: by whom he meant M. and Madame Lascaris, who having had a son named John or Hanah, were hence called, according to the custom

of the East, he Abu Hanah or John's father, and she Um Hanah, or John's mother: for the pride of parents, in the East, is their first-born, more especially if a boy.

The khan or caravansery of Nebk is one of the most spacious and best built between Damascus and Hamah, but of the same plain form as that already described. Ibrahim woke me early. I had slept on the sofa in one of the bishop's rooms in my clothes, and to rise from bed and shake myself was all the preparation necessary except washing. The night had been very cold, and the maid brought me warm water. The mode of washing in the East is quite different from that in use among us: the servant pours water from a ewer, like an old-fashioned coffee-pot, upon the hands, which is carried in splashes to the face and neck, and a basin held beneath, or on the ground, receives it, as it falls.

On the 10th in the morning we resumed our journey. The air was piercingly cold, for it now swept across the Desert. We arrived in the afternoon at Carah, where I was known, but I did not go to my old habitation, preferring the caravansery. On the 11th we reached Hassyah. There was a woman in the caravan, rather pretty, whose object on the journey appeared to be somewhat mysterious. She seemed to be a native of some of the Arab villages, as her face and arms were tatooed. She attached herself to the muleteer who had the care of my luggage, and who

was very officious in attending to her wants, as in spreading out sacks and other things to render her rest during the night comfortable, &c.

When the business of the day was over, the muleteer made up a fire on the ground; and, seated at it with this woman, would carouse until a late hour in the night. Coffee, however, was their only liquor, and seldom could they afford more than two cups each. The intervals were filled up in smoking the narkýly, which passed from mouth to mouth between the muleteer and his dulcinea.

Prudence obliged me to sleep as near to my luggage as possible, and I was often, when not better lodged, compelled to lie down close to where they were. So, drawing my cloak over my face, I peeped out from time to time to see that my goods and chattels were safe, and thus undesignedly had occasion to observe their conduct, which was always conformable with that reserve of character for which Mahometan women are proverbial in the presence of strangers.

December the 12th we slept at Hems; and on the 14th in the evening I arrived at Hamah. There I found Lady Hester settled in a small but good house; and in another, also assigned to her, were M. Lascaris and his wife, with whom I took up my abode.

Lady Hester told me that a Bedouin Arab, a mulatto,

named Hassan el Drymàn, had been sent to her by the Emir Mahannah, to beg the favour of a visit from her physician, as he was very infirm and much indisposed. This opportunity of sojourning with the Bedouins was eagerly caught at. My departure was immediately concluded on as a matter that would ensure a double purpose: for it would farther strengthen the friendship of the Emir, by whose permission alone Lady Hester could get to Palmyra; and would afford me an opportunity of judging how far there was a possibility for her to perform a journey through wastes, which, we were told, are without water and without vegetation. Hassan was therefore desired to wait a few days, until I could get ready to accompany him.

Lady Hester was already grown tired of M. Lascaris, whose recollections of the past were but little calculated to inspire him with feelings consonant to his present situation. Misfortune had affected his mind: and, one night, being suddenly called up by Madame Lascaris, I was witness to an attack of phrenzy that at once terrified me and excited my commiseration. I advised him, therefore, as a means of diverting his mind from his sorrow, to travel again; so, having received a handsome gratification from Lady Hester for his trouble, he was requested to make his present lodging his home, until he had decided whither to go.

During the few days I passed at Hamah previous to my departure, the secrecy with which the Turkish government is accustomed to execute its measures was exemplified in the removal and imprisonment of the motsellem. On the morning of the 19th of December, several soldiers, by twos and threes, had entered the place unobserved; and, being dispersed about, no notice was taken of them. On a sudden, they appeared in a body at the front of the motsellem's house, and, entering it, seized his person. They then plundered his house and his stables, carrying off everything excepting his women; and the governor was in chains, and on his road to Damascus, almost before his disgrace was known.

M. Lascaris had long had an inclination to visit Palmyra, but never had been able to accomplish his purpose. He determined, therefore, on accompanying me, and relied for his security on the acquaintance he had made with the Emir Mahannah, when with Lady Hester Stanhope. He gave me to understand that he had formed the chimerical scheme of abandoning the world, to plant potatoes at Palmyra, and M. de Lamartine, in his Souvenirs du Levant, (Appendix) insists that, under these frivolous pretences, M. Lascaris was fulfilling a mission entrusted to him by the Emperor Napoleon to fraternize with the tribes of the Desert, and pave the way for conquests in the East, long meditated by that victorious monarch. I could not be otherwise than pleased

that he should go with me, because I supposed that his knowledge of the Arabic language would be useful to me, and his society agreeable. Besides, in cases of danger, (and I did not think this expedition altogether free from it) it is pleasant to have a companion whose courage and experience may be useful. As Lady Hester herself has compressed most of these details of my narrative in a letter, I shall here annex it.

Lady Hester Stanhope to Lieut. General Oakes.

Hamah upon the Orontes,
January 25th, 1813.

My dear General,

You will hardly believe that your kind letters of April the 5th, May the 26th, and September the 24th, 1812, only reached me about a month ago at this place, together with the excellent medicine-chest you were so good as to send me. All had been detained at Smyrna, with other letters sent by Mr. Liston, till the plague had subsided a little. I must now return you my grateful thanks for the interest you were so good as to take about my misfortunes, and for having done as much as you have done to promote my comfort and convenience. If I was not afraid of boring you, I should say fifty times as much upon the subject of your goodness to me in every way.

I have written you three letters from Damascus—I think, indeed, whenever I had an opportunity; knowing that merchant-vessels went backwards and forwards from this coast to Malta, I thought it possible that if the captains could *speak*—for they are great newsmongers—all the reports in this country would be taken there, and alarm you for my safety. I am now referring to the one about the approach of the Wahabees upon Damascus, which obliged me to write you a hasty letter,

which perhaps you never received. I wrote another after it to say the Wahabees had not been heard of in that quarter, as was expected. Previous to both these letters, I sent you a bag containing letters for England.

I have been obliged to give up my long intended journey to Palmyra for the present: for the pasha *would* send me, and the Arabs *would* take me, and there was such a fuss about it altogether, that it would not have been prudent to have undertaken it from Damascus. I *now* can account why the pasha's man, into whose hands I was to be consigned, would take 1000 men, because the Arab chief had threatened to cut off his beard, and strip all his people naked, if he took me at all; the honour, the Arab said, should be his, as the desert was his. In the spring, however, we mean to try it again, and hope to succeed.

When B. was nursing Mr. Barker, who had a fever, I made an experiment upon the good faith of the Arabs; I went with the great chief, Mahanna El Fadel (who commands 40,000 men) into the desert for a week, and marched three days with their encampment. I was treated with the greatest respect and hospitality, and it was, perhaps, altogether, the most curious sight I ever saw: horses and mares fed upon camels' milk, Arabs living upon little else, except a little rice, and sometimes a sort of bread; the space around me covered with living things, 1,000 camels coming to water from one tribe only; the old poets from the banks of the Euphrates, singing the praises and the feats of ancient heroes; children quite naked; women with lips dyed light-blue, and their nails red, and hands all over flowers and designs of different kinds; a chief who is obeyed like a great king—starvation and pride so mixed, that I really could not have had an idea of it: even the clothes I presented the sons of Mahanna they could not carry, or indeed hold, but called a black slave to take them. How-

ever, I have every reason to be perfectly contented with their conduct towards me, and I am the *queen* with them all.

The Wahabees, I find, are at least 40,000 strong, and many more when joined by other Arabs, enough to overthrow the Ottoman empire. If Mahomet Ali drives them from Mecca, they will come down upon Syria, and then take refuge again in the desert; and what troops are to follow them? I thought my horse did great things to come a long three days' journey without water; and to carry water for cavalry would be impossible, I should imagine. In short, I fear we shall hear much of these Wahabees hereafter.

So you wish to be once more in a field of battle?—this is like a true soldier, who, I believe, is never happy out of it.

We came to this place to be near the desert, and to learn a little of what is going on there from good authority;—the Arabs being still at war, it is necessary to be aware of their proceedings. Last month the weather was delightful, but of late it has snowed; and so much rain has fallen, that not a house in the place is habitable. Every room is a pond, and there is no communication betwixt one part of the town and the other, from the Orontes having overflowed:—firing very scarce, and everybody very miserable. A village a mile off has been half destroyed, and fifty persons killed, either by the falling-in of the houses, or drowned.

Not long ago, a body of Albanians, by order of the pasha, entered this town, took the governor out of his bed, put him into chains, carried him off, and seized all his property, and also every fine horse they could lay their hands upon. A very showy horse Suliman Pasha of Acre had given me, I had given to the doctor, and it was waiting for him before the door of a public bath; the Albanians were marching off with that also, although told it belonged to a Frank, not a Turk. One, however, asked, is the *Frank* one of the queen's people? Upon being answered in the affirmative, he said, " Take the

horse to the stable, I shall not touch it, but some of our people may, not knowing to whom it belongs." What I have before told you about myself, I know, my dear General, looks like *conceit*, but it is true; and it is something to have one's people and things respected at a moment when no legislative power exists in a place, and every one is in fear and trembling.

As soon as the weather mends, Mulla Ismael, the powerful Delibash, will return from Damascus; the pasha sent him to collect the *miri* in Palestine, for he was afraid to go himself. Mulla Ismael is a great friend of mine, and I shall go out to meet him in the Turkish way: it will be a compliment to him, and besides make me personally known to those of his troops who have not seen me before. He is a very jolly Turk, and has four wives here, and I believe fifty women—so many that I cannot count them: they are all very good to me, and less shut up than any women I ever saw in this country. No Pasha has ever yet succeeded in cutting off this man's head, though many have tried; but he is too powerful, and the Arabs are too fond of him. He has taken refuge amongst them twice, and he now feeds every Arab who comes into Hamah, as a mark of his gratitude.

B. is in very good health, and means to write to you; the doctor is curing Arab chiefs somewhere about Palmyra. After the experiment I made in going alone amongst these people, I thought I might safely send him, which I did with a single Arab, who was to put him into the hands of my powerful friend, Mahanna El Fadel. He went very safe, and was extremely well treated the last time I heard: but Mahanna told him that if B. attempted to come into the desert, unless with me, he would cut off the heads of those who brought him before his eyes.

Adieu, my dear General, and believe me,

Ever yours most sincerely,

H. L. S.

Your Vino d'Oro is now waiting near the coast, and, as soon as a good opportunity offers, it shall be sent. Hope was to have taken it, but he is gone; but I trust I may hear of other good captains upon the coast in the spring: in a Greek ship it would be all drunk. I am trying to get some wild boar hams prepared for you, but I am yet uncertain how I shall succeed. We want strong dogs here very much, for the boars are very savage. I must not forget to tell you that the Chevalier Lascaris is become deranged. He goes about, however, but is, nor never will be, fit for anything; but as being employed and having money from Malta is always uppermost in his thoughts, it would be a charity to put him out of suspense by some formal letter—that is to say, if you think it quite proper.

It was necessary to make a total alteration in my dress previous to setting off; for anything that could excite the cupidity of the Bedouins was to be considered as unnecessarily smart. I therefore purchased two very coarse cotton shirts, with long sleeves tapering to a point; a white cotton kombaz; a pair of cotton drawers, which were to serve as breeches; worsted socks; uncouth red boots; two tanned sheepskin pelisses, one long and one short; a red skull cap, to be covered with a silk handkerchief, called a keffýah, green and orange-coloured, the corners of which, drawn across the lower part of the face, leave only the eyes visible. As Bedouins have little to do with the washtub, these different articles were thought abundantly sufficient for an entire wardrobe. The

cost of them was about two pounds sterling. A second-hand abah, striped blue and white, was the ragged covering of the whole. (See engraving.) M. Lascaris was attired nearly in the same manner. It was on the 2nd of January, 1813, that we left Hamah, and this accounts for the anticipation of some details in the latter part of Lady Hester's letter, which is dated the 25th.

The curious reader is requested to compare these dates with the history of this same M. Lascaris, as related by M. de Lamartine in his "Souvenirs du Levant."

CHAPTER IV.

The author enters the Desert—Hostile tribes of Bedouins—Beni Khaled Arabs—Their tents, manners, &c.—Arabian hospitality—Tels or Conical mounds—Aspect of the Desert—Want of Water—Hadidýn Arabs—Mountains of Gebel el Abyad—Bedouin horsemen—Bedouin encampment—Mahannah, the Emir—Bedouin repasts—Character of Mahannah—Nature of his authority—His revenue—Means used by the Bedouins to obtain gifts—March of a Bedouin tribe—Contrivance for mounting camels—Gentleness of the camel—Snow—Search for Water—Detention of the author by Mahannah—He is suffered to depart for Palmyra—Encounter with robbers—Plain of Mezah—Disappointment at the distant sight of Palmyra—Arrival there.

We were mounted on stallions well conditioned. Each was provided with a wallet, containing three feeds of barley, twenty bread-cakes, three pounds of raisins, a provision of coffee, a bag of tobacco, and with a leathern water-bottle. We had no arms but my carbine, which Hassan carried; M. Lascaris not choosing to be burdened with any, and I following the advice of Lady Hester, who desired me to show no mistrust of my guide; and Hassan received to the

value of four guineas at parting, which sum was to be doubled at my safe return.

After travelling two hours, the marks of cultivation ceased, and we might be said to have entered the Desert. Here we passed a small rivulet, that empties itself into the Orontes, where we watered our horses, and, after drinking ourselves, filled our water-bottles, there being no other running stream in the intermediate space until our arrival at Palmyra. At a quarter to two we came to a ruined village, where, in the year 1811, was fought a battle between the tribes of the Anizy and the Faydân, in which the latter were completely routed, their wives, their camels, and their tents, falling into the hands of the victors. To the north of the field of battle, on the summit of a conical mountain, stands a castle in ruins, called Calâat Shumamys. Passing it at the distance of half a league, we inclined to the north, and came abreast of Salamyah, one mile off. Salamyah, once a populous Arab town, but now without an inhabitant, was destroyed by the grandfather of Mahannah, the emir I was about to visit.

Our course was now due east, as far as could be judged by the sun, for we were not furnished with a compass. On our right we observed a conical mound, with heaps of stones on its summit, apparently relics of an old building. As soon as the view opened beyond it, Hassan espied some smoke, which he knew to proceed from Arab tents. We made towards it, and reached

a circular encampment of about forty tents. They were those of the Beni Khaled, a tribe who live by their flocks.[1] Such Arabs as these would seem to form the connecting link between the Bedouins and the husbandmen of the villages; living under tents, and shifting from place to place in search of pasture, like the former, but, like the latter, paying tribute to the pasha of the district. Their tents are more comfortable than those of the Bedouins; they are more civilized, and, in their dress and food, are on a par with the peasantry.

We alighted at the tent of the shaykh, or chieftain. The tent appeared to be about forty feet long, divided by a partition which gave two thirds to the women and one third to the men. It was made of a coarse black stuff, which the women weave from, I believe, goat's hair, and which resembles in its texture horsehair sacking. The tent consisted of a double pent roof, supported by four, six, eight, or more stakes, extended by means of ropes pegged in the ground. To the windward side a curtain is tacked on, that generally lets in the wind, the rain, or the snow, through the interstices. A curtain of the same stuff formed the division between the men and the women. The front was entirely open. This description may

[1] This tribe is spoken of in Niebuhr's travels, as pasturing in his time on the shores of the Persian Gulph at Sehat el Arab; unless there are more tribes than one of the same name.

serve for all the Arab tents, with this difference, that the Bedouins, for the most part, have theirs full of rents and holes, and that they are otherwise wanting in something to make them weather-tight; so that to live under them is nearly the same as living in the open air. The furniture of a tent consists of three or four flowered carpets, about as large as bed-carpets, which they spread to sit and sleep on. For cushions they make use of the pack-saddles of the camels. The richer sort have occasionally a flowered cotton or satin coverlet, generally faded and ragged; for it never happened to me to see more than one new one. The women likewise have sometimes cane screens, prettily worked in colours, which they set up, in order not to be seen from without, in front of the tent; but they care so little for these petty luxuries, that, in the season of lambing, they will oftener pen their lambs with them than use them for themselves, although the sheep generally drop their lambs in the depth of winter.

The few utensils they have are a small copper boiler, a coffee-pot, and two or three coffee-cups of different sizes, a wooden pestle and mortar to pound coffee, and an iron ladle to roast it in: this is the apparatus for coffee-drinking, the most important business of Bedouin housekeeping. For cooking they are provided with a large flat saucepan without handles, a porridge-pot, and an iron dish something of the shape of a pewter plate. There is a flat iron

dish for baking the bread, and a portable corn-mill for grinding wheat when they have any. Spoons, knives and forks, skimmers, and all the etcetera of European kitchens, they despise, and would not use if they had them.

We alighted from our horses, which Hassan tethered for us, and entered the tent. Everybody rose to receive us, and the upper place was immediately vacated for us. The shaykh's son, untying the corner of his shirt-sleeve, produced from it half a handful of raw coffee, and, taking the ladle, proceeded himself to roast it, turning it over occasionally with an iron spoon, which was chained to the ladle that it might not be lost or stolen. The coffee, when roasted, was turned into the mortar; and, with a deliberate and solemn air, the son commenced pounding it. This he did in measured time, between every beat jingling the pestle against the sides of the mortar; a sort of music never omitted by the coffee-pounder, who gets more or less credit, according as he beats and jingles more or less in time. The sound of the mortar is the signal for all the idlers on every side to flock in, in order to get a cup of coffee, and in a few minutes we were in the midst of a dozen self-invited Bedouins. The coffee-maker then, taking out the cups from a small basket, which the better sort have to keep them in, wiped them with an old rag; for water is much too precious an article to be used on such occasions. He gave his left hand a graceful

turn, poured out the coffee, drank a little himself, and then handed it to us and to Hassan. We took it without ceremony, but Hassan insisted that he could not drink before the master of the tent: much compliment ensued, and Hassan was persuaded. This beverage was poured out scalding hot from the fire; and, besides the certainty of burning the tongue, hot coffee without sugar or milk to any one but an oriental, has but a bitter and unsavoury taste.[1] The same cup (and sometimes they have but one) was often filled for another person. We were then politely asked what news there was, and who we were; for it is a rule of hospitality never to require a guest to tell his business until he has rested himself and drunk his coffee.

The sun being set, we were witnesses to the return of the herds of camels and goats and of the flocks of sheep from pasture. This, in a desert, is the most cheerful sight that can be imagined. The musical call of the herdsmen, joined with the bleating and lowing

[1] It is to be observed that this journal is given as written from day to day, with recent impressions upon me; but, as I became acquainted with the country and the people, many of these impressions on maturer reflection were considered as erroneous. I ought likewise to observe, that I have considerable doubt of the accuracy of the names of places in this journey to Palmyra, because I wrote them down by the sound, and had no one to give them to me in writing, a method I always pursued, for the sake of correctness, wherever it was possible.

of such vast numbers of animals, covering, as they approached the tents, a circle of a league, formed a pastoral scene that can no where be witnessed but with the Arabs. The women milked the ewes and the goats, and folded the lambs and kids; whilst the flocks and herds, assembled within the circle of the tents, were guarded by the dogs, who patrole round the outside, and render the approach of wolves and hyenas with which the Desert is infested almost impossible. The shepherds themselves, wrapped in their pelisses of sheep-skin, sleep in the midst of them.

The women now prepared the supper. Opening a sack of flour, they kneaded a certain quantity with water; and, without the aid of rolling-pins, by a rotatory motion of the left arm, they flattened the paste into a thin circular shape, about one foot and a half in diameter. They then laid it on an iron plate, placed over a fire made in a hole in the ground, and in three minutes it was baked. Lastly, they threw it on the ashes to keep it warm, until a sufficient number of these cakes were prepared: and, this done, supper was served up. It consisted, on the present occasion, of a dish of scraps of mutton chopped up with onions, and fried with butter, and a dish of boiled rice with melted butter poured over it. A circular rush mat, about three feet in diameter, was thrown on the bare ground; and, round it, before each guest, were likewise thrown (as the Arabs did not seem to make a

practice of stooping) two or three of the above mentioned bread-cakes ; for it is considered as the highest dereliction of hospitality among them not to put bread more than enough. As many persons as could find room round the table placed themselves at it. They doubled the left leg under them, and, sitting with their haunches on their left heel, their right leg crooked with the knee towards the chin, they rested their right arm, bared up to the elbow, upon it. Without spoons, with nothing else but their fingers, each thrust his right hand into the dish ; and, grasping a handful, tossed it up as a brickmaker does his clay, until he had cooled it and squeezed out the superfluous butter, which, falling again into the dish, was taken up in the next handful, to be again served in the same way. This extraordinary mode of eating is the effect of necessity. Every thing is served up in the same saucepan in which it is cooked, and, as haste in eating (for they cannot be said to be voracious) is a marked feature among them, were any one to wait until the dish cooled to his liking, he would probably find nothing left. As, therefore, he grasps a handful too hot to hold, he jerks it up and down, until, by exposing it to the air, it is somewhat cooler. He then passes his thumb, from below upwards, across the palm of his hand, and thus conveys the huge pellet into his mouth. As soon as any one has finished, he rises, and is succeeded by another, this one by a third, and

so on in succession, until either the guests are all satisfied, or, which more frequently happens, until the dish is cleared.

Instead of washing their hands after eating (as is universally practised in towns throughout the East) they drew them through the dust on the ground to remove the grease, and then wiped them on their cloaks. This excess of filth no doubt has its origin in the constant want of water: yet it has been observed that, when encamped near a stream, they will do the same thing. Coffee was again served with the same formalities as before, and a conversation of about two hours concluded the evening.

Gathering our little effects together, for fear of losing them during the night, and tethering our horses within a few feet of the tent from the like apprehension, we placed our wallets under our heads for pillows, and, covering ourselves with our pelisses, took turns to watch and sleep during the night; the ground our bed and the heavens our covering. But, although the season of the year was winter, the weather was mild, and we flattered ourselves that it would continue so.

On the third of January, before sunrise, we untied our horses, and, without inquiring for our host or he for us, departed. The hospitality of the Orientals has been much praised by many authors; but it seems to be a duty which they perform ceremoniously and coldly, unless they foresee some advantage from it.

We proceeded in an easterly direction. The plain now showed no signs of ruined habitations, as on the preceding day. We passed several mounds, generally called in Arabic *Tel*, like that observed near the field of battle of the Anizy and Faydân tribes. It cannot be doubted that these mounds are artificial, and served as the sites of watch-towers or of fortresses to protect villages built at the foot of them. This is probable from the similarity of shape in all of them, it being conical: and also because they are observed only through the champaign part of the Desert, where a small elevation could command the neighbouring country, and give an extent of prospect necessary for military observation. What further confirms this opinion is that, beyond the ruins of Salamyah, there are four mounds in a strait line, an exactitude not often observable in the works of nature.[1]

Immense flights of birds, known by the name of partridges of the Desert, were seen in every direction: occasionally also some eagles and cranes. It is curious to mark how the size of objects is increased when seen on the edge of the horizon in these wastes. The eagles appeared like men: and there now seemed to me to be nothing ludicrous in the misconception of General Dessaix, who, when in Egypt, took a flock of

[1] M. Lascaris thought they had been Roman camps; but that these tels had once fortresses upon them may be collected from a passage in Abulfeda, (Tab. Syr. p. 24) who, speaking of Tel Basher near Aleppo, styles it "The fortress Tel Basher."

ostriches for a troop of horse, and arranged his men in order of battle for their reception.

Towards noon, the look of the country, from having been like the Sussex Downs, changed to a rocky appearance. And here we may correct an erroneous idea as to the nature of these Deserts: that name does not (as is generally imagined) imply always a sandy barrenness and unfitness for culture, but rather the absence of towns and villages, and the want of water and cultivation; many portions of the Syrian desert being, as in the present instance, as productive under tillage as other places are. The Arabs make use of a word *beréah*, which, literally translated, means "*waste*;" and the term Desert can only be applied with precision to the sands of Africa. The want of water is the effect of the policy of the Bedouins; who choke up what springs and wells they can, in order to render the lodgment of troops impossible, and thus to maintain their own independence; trusting for themselves to a knowledge of remote springs, and to a precarious supply from holes in the rocks; or drinking the milk of their camels. Nor would the possession of the Desert be a matter of difficulty to troops furnished with the means of digging wells, which Ottoman troops never are: for water, I understood, was to be found at twelve feet deep nearly throughout the whole tract which we passed. And it is remarkable that, at the entrance on the vast plain to the East of Palmyra, which Wood and Dawkins pronounced to have been

eternally desert, water is found at a depth of three feet only, according to an experiment made under my own eyes, during our second journey. The Desert, then, of Syria is to be figured in the mind as a country of hills, mountains, and plains: in the spring covered with verdure, in the autumn burnt up with heat. But to return from this digression.

We here found rain-water lodged in holes, and, alighting, drank, and unbridled the horses, that they might do the same. It was an affecting sight to observe the poor animals, after twenty four hours' thirst, eagerly attempting to get at the puddles, which, being sunk in holes, were difficult to come at. One gave it up; the other fell on his knees, and contrived to moisten his mouth, but could not succeed in slaking his thirst. Hassan, in the mean time, observed all this with indifference, whilst we, commiserating our poor animals, could have almost wept at the sight. The former knew, that, if we were not unusually fortunate, we might have to endure hunger and thirst for double that period: whilst we, new to the scene, saw every thing with the eyes of persons used to the comforts of civilized life. Our wallets were now examined, and we made a very humble dinner on dry bread, raisins, and water, and some fragments which Hassan had secured.

Remounting, we continued our journey. Our route was very zigzag, as we crossed in every direction where Hassan thought we might fall in with the tribes we

were in search of. The soil was still rocky. At two o'clock we passed over the foundations of a ruined town, once inhabited (as Hassan told us) by Turkmans. The remains of an aqueduct and a cistern were visible. A short distance farther, we came to the foot of a chain of low mountains, running north and south, where we found abundance of water lodged in holes as before, but easy to get at. Here the horses drank abundantly, and appeared to acquire fresh spirits and vigour. On the left, about two miles off, Hassan pointed to the ruins of a town, where he said there existed a reservoir of water in good preservation. The mountains were covered with a scattered forest of the turpentine tree, and these were the first trees we had seen since leaving Hamah.

We ascended a circuitous path through a defile, and came to the summit. Passing by a way seemingly cut by the hand of man at some early period through the rock, the view, on a sudden, opening before us, we espied, about a league off, a herd of goats browsing: an indication that there were tents not far off. We descended into a valley, wanting, apparently, nothing but the assistance of the husbandman to render it as fertile as the vale of the Bkâ, or any of the celebrated plains of Syria. Crossing it, and reascending the opposite mountain, we came to an elevated tract of downs. Here was encamped a party of the tribe of the Hadýdy, whom Hassan immediately recognized by the number of asses grazing round the tents. They

were Bedouins, paying no tribute. They rode on asses, and used firearms, then chiefly matchlocks. Their riches consisted principally in sheep and goats; having few camels: and on this account they were considered as a degenerated tribe; the true Bedouin despising all animals but horses and camels.

Hassan deliberated whether it would be proper to pass the night with them or not: for he gave us to understand that they were inhospitable and of a thievish disposition. Night, however, was coming on; and learning, upon inquiry, that the Melhem, the tribe to which we were going, was some leagues off, he led the way to the tent of the shaykh or chieftain, where we alighted.

Hassan had underrated their civility on this occasion; for the shaykh, when he knew who we were, showed us much attention. This was owing to a circumstance which contributed greatly to the kind treatment we received throughout the Desert, and which it is worth while to mention. When Lady Hester, during the month of December, had paid a visit to the Emir of the Anizys, at that time encamped near the ruins of Salamyah, she had made him several presents: and the reputation of her generosity being spread about, ensured a kind reception to any one who now came in her name, from the hopes of a participation in her future favours on her proposed journey to Palmyra; for the Arabs are poor and covetous, and never neglect any channel

that may lead to gain, however circuitous it may appear to be.

A dish of melted butter, with bread soaked in it, was served for supper, and we slept as on the preceding night. On the 4th, soon after sunrise, we bridled our horses, and proceeded on our way. People who have no fixed habitation are not always immediately to be found. It is indeed a wild-goose chase to go in search of an Arab's tents; and, though inquiry had been made of every person that could afford information, all that could be learned was that Mahannah was encamped somewhere at the foot of Gebel el Abyad, a chain of mountains of some leagues, which extends east and west, wide of Palmyra. The White Mountain (so Gebel el Abyad means) was in sight, and Hassan took the lead towards it in an east-south-east direction, as I guessed the point of the compass to be from the sun. The weather was clear and mild, having favoured us thus far from the day of our departure. We had proceeded but a short distance before we crossed a drove of camels, led by a Bedouin girl mounted on the bell camel, whilst the herdsman, mounted also, brought up the rear. Hassan recognized him as one of his own tribe, and, salutations having passed, inquired where the Emir Mahannah was. The herdsman informed him that the emir was that day moving his tents to fresh pastures.

Inclining to the south-east, we encountered other herds and several Bedouin horsemen. The plain now

wore a barren appearance, being gravelly, with patches of moss that seemed to destroy vegetation. The horsemen, however distant they might be from us, never failed to ride up and ascertain who we were ; and, when Hassan made himself and us known, still they would unceremoniously fumble our wallets with the points of their spears to feel what they contained, as if lamenting that the protection of our conductor prevented them from appropriating the contents to themselves. Some, with gloomy insolence, demanded a pipe of tobacco ; which, as we had been previously instructed to do, we always refused or denied having : for it is the maxim of the Bedouins to try a person's fears by a small demand, with which, if he complies, they proceed to a greater, and finish, if they think it safe, by stripping him of all he has. Their scowling looks, rendered more suspicious by the vizor of their handkerchiefs, made their questions very unpleasant, and we felt uneasy, although we knew, or at least felt assured, that nothing could happen to us, protected as we were by Hassan, the Emir Mahannah's officer.

Obtaining fresh information as we proceeded, we continued inclining to the right, and, at the close of the day, had made nearly a semicircle, finishing in the west. The whole of the way this day we met with no water, and our only repast was dry bread and the remains of the supply in the water-bottles. About four o'clock we found ourselves in the midst of several droves of camels, and a quarter of an hour more

brought us to the encampment. Some tents were already pitched without order either as to precedence or regularity; and, on subsequent occasions, it was observable that every Bedouin chose the spot he liked best, with this exception, that the relations and slaves of the emir generally occupied the ground immediately about him. We advanced towards the emir, and alighted. Whilst his tent was pitching, he had seated himself on the ground; and his slaves, having lighted a blazing fire, were preparing coffee. He rose to receive us, being apprised of our coming by certain Bedouins, who had passed us. Nasar, the eldest son of the emir, whom I had known at Hamah, saluted me with a kiss on each cheek, the common salutation between friends among them. Being seated, coffee was served, and a moment was given for observing the physiognomy and dress of the emir, prince at that time of all the desert tract of country which extends, in the rear of Syria, from Aleppo down to Damascus and as far back as the Euphrates.

He seemed to be about fifty-five years old, with a piercing eye, which amply made up for the defect of hearing under which he laboured. His beard was ragged and shaggy, as were his eyebrows. His face and hands, apparently strangers to the use of water, were begrimed with dirt. On his head he wore a shawl of stuff, coarse as a towel, put on with the superlative carelessness of a Bedouin toilet. In other respects his dress resembled that described above as

the costume of this people, excepting that he had no breeches or drawers, and no boots or shoes; his feet having for their only covering a pair of worsted socks. His body vest or frock, however, was of fine striped satin of Damascus, red and yellow, originally perhaps the plunder of some traveller, but now exhibiting all the magnificence of Rag-fair.[1]

After coffee, a platter of what the Arabs call *dibs* was set on the ground, with about a dozen bread-cakes like those before described. This dibs is the scum of boiled juice of grapes, in French *raisiné*, and has much the taste and appearance of treacle: it is a favourite dish with all the Arabs. We were invited to eat by ourselves; the emir having probably eaten before our arrival.

In the mean time, the princess, wife of Mahannah, with her daughter and her black slaves, were employed in unloading the cooking-utensils, carpets, &c., from the camels. This done, the daughter took a pickaxe in her hand, and went in search of roots for firing, the plain producing no other fuel. In about half an

[1] I extract a description of Nasar and his father from the Travels (I think, for I have lost the reference,) of Captains Mangles and Irby. "Mahannah, his father, was a short, crooked-backed, mean-looking, old man, between 70 and 80 years of age, dressed in a common sort of robe: his son, Narsah, (Nasar) to whom he had in consequence of his age resigned the reins of government, was a good-looking man about 30 years of age, with very dignified and engaging manners."—P. 261.

hour she returned, bearing an enormous load bound up in her woollen cloak, which would have fatigued the shoulders of an English porter. She was a girl of about seventeen, with tolerably good features, a muddy brown complexion, and teeth as white as snow.

Preparations were now made for supper. As the tent of the emir is the resort of all strangers who arrive from different quarters, there were seldom fewer than a dozen persons to be fed besides his own family, which was also very numerous. An immense flat boiler, containing not less than twelve gallons, was placed on the fire, and half filled with rice, water, and butter. The water collected from holes in the rock, and from puddles, and brought in goat-skins, was as muddy as that of a horsepond. The mixture was boiled until the water was evaporated, and consequently the mud incorporated. When cooked, it was served up reeking in the same boiler. It was eaten in the same manner that has been already described, a second and a third set succeeding the first: whilst the boys stood round, like so many dogs, to catch a pellet, occasionally given them by their fathers.

To conclude what may be said on the repasts of the Bedouins, it cannot be denied that they approach nearer to beasts in their manner of eating than any other people. To give an example: a horseman, on a showery day, arrives, and alights at the tent; and his first care is to dry his feet at the fire, and wipe them with his hands. Dinner or supper happens to be

served at the same instant, and he seats himself to handle his food with the same fingers that have just served so nasty a purpose: it being understood that he seldom can, and never does, wash them. Is a stranger at table? Politeness demands that the host should heap up the rice in the dish before him, or, if it be meat, should tear it from the bones and hand it to him; which it would be an affront in the stranger to refuse. Does the repast consist (which is often the case) of bread and melted butter? he breaks the bread and works it up for his guest with the butter: all which operations are executed with the hands. In fine, those who have seen the Drûzes of Mount Lebanon devour raw meat, or the chimney-sweepers of London swallow black pudding, still have never witnessed such a meal as the repasts of the Bedouins.

Coffee was served, pipes were lighted, and, as we were just arrived from Hamah, whence we were supposed to have brought tobacco with us, we had much ado to withstand the bold and frequent requests to fill the pipes of our neighbours. A conversation on the politics of the plain concluded the evening. The prince retired to his wife, while the rest of the party betook themselves, each on the spot where he sat, to sleep; merely drawing his cloak over his face, and putting his wallet under his head, both to serve as a pillow, and to prevent its being pilfered.

An Arab never undresses but to clean himself from vermin. The clothes he has he wears until they either

fall off his back in rags, or fresh plunder, or a present from his chief, supplies him with a better suit. Few of them have more than a shirt and a sheepskin pelisse — going without frock, stockings, and boots. These three latter articles, indeed, not many can afford, and many care not for. Their sheepskin is of the greatest use to them, serving instead of a bed to sleep on, and as a covering from wet and cold at all seasons.

It may not be improper to say a few words in order that it may be better understood by the reader what the title Emir implies. Mahannah el Fadel might be said to command that tract of country which extends from Hamah down to Damascus, and backwards as far as Palmyra, perhaps beyond; but it is impossible for a stranger to learn or mark out any precise boundaries for a people, the nature of whose possessions, and even of whose existence, is so uncertain, both from the vicissitudes of their fortune, and from their wandering habits. He was chieftain of the tribe of the Melhem, and had in subjection to him other tribes, all of which go by the general name of Anizy Arabs. What the nature of his authority over them was I could not ascertain; such as it was, he succeeded to it at his father's death, not as an hereditary right, but from the preponderance that his family had had the art to secure to itself. This preponderance seems to be owing to several causes; for the family was very numerous, and succeeding emirs had the means, by various

intermarriages with the rich shaykhs of the tribe, to combine a vast extent of interests in the chief of it.

But, although a prince, Mahannah did not seem to be a single jot more polished than his meanest herdsman. Perhaps any excess of urbanity, any appearance of dignity, would only tend, among a rude people, to weaken his power instead of strengthening it: on common occasions he was, therefore, but one of the herd. His tent was larger but had not more splendour; his mare was not more richly caparisoned than that of others, nor did he seem to me to be distinguished by his external appearance from that of the commonest Bedouins round him. Equality, no doubt, does not reign among them; but how far the assumption of much authority would be followed by the desertion of such as thought themselves oppressed by it, I will not venture to say. The security which laws afford the weak against the strong certainly does not exist here in the same extent as in cities, and all the boasted advantages of their seeming equality only enable the aggrieved to retire from the aggressor.

Neither did the dignity we may attribute to the person of a chieftain seem better protected. Had a Bedouin presumed to insult Mahannah, had he dared to dispute his commands, where was the remedy? He might, indeed, as he was often said to do, in the fury of passion, inflict the chastisement which the culprit merited with his own hand, or he might brood over the insult until an opportunity occurred of re-

venging it. There was no protection against theft but watchfulness, no surety against murder but that worst of all laws, the law of retaliation.

Mahannah levied a toll of about the value of eighteen-pence a head, and two dollars for each camel-load on all caravans that passed through or by his territory. I was told that he annually received a present of six shillings a head from all the merchants of Damascus, Aleppo, and the towns between them. He levied contributions of corn, of provisions, of dress, upon the villages of the desert, such as Palmyra (which is said to pay him one thousand five hundred piasters in money, and to the same amount in clothes), Carie-tayn, Sedad, and others. Hamah paid him 150 camel-loads of wheat, which he generally distributed among his friends. Besides this, he scrupled not, when his necessities were pressing, to demand of the governors or rich individuals with whom he was friendly, articles of dress, horses, and the like: nor did he fail, generally, to weary the liberality of his most generous friends.

But there was another mode of enriching himself which must not be passed over in silence. Whoever, as a stranger, ventured to trust himself in the power of the Bedouins, had reason to perceive that, as robbery is their profession, they are dexterous enough to have more ways than one in committing it; and that he who receives hospitality from them, however much vaunted by travellers the sacredness of that hospitality

may be, is doomed to pay for it in some way or other. Business, the oppression of the government, and sometimes curiosity, but never pleasure, brings every now and then a Syrian of consideration among them, and the tent of the prince is the place where he is sure of a welcome. Scarcely has he passed a night under it, when the prince politely admires the beauty of his shawl, and by obvious hints asks him for it. There is no alternative for the visitor but to beg his acceptance of it; for he recollects that he is in his power, and that what is so politely asked for may be forcibly taken. Supposing he opens his saddle-bags or his box, and some curious eye discovers that he has a provision of coffee, or a change of linen? the prince is informed of it, and begs to see it, and, as it is something not actually on the person of his guest, he fairly asks him for it. Our visitor, as is the custom in the East, slips off his boots when he enters the tent: the prince observes that they are better than his own, and unceremoniously when he goes out makes an exchange with him. But, not to leave him the satisfaction of knowing, at least, that he has contributed to the comfort or finery of his host, he sees the very articles given away, after a few days' wear, to some strange shaykh, who, were he to meet the original proprietor alone in the desert, would make no scruple of stripping him entirely.

All these were formerly the secondary sources of revenue to the Anizys, whilst the pilgrimage to Mecca,

before the tomb of the Prophet fell into the hands of the Wahabees, was an annual harvest to them; for it was the Anizys who escorted it across the desert, and furnished the pilgrims with camels. This honourable employment was granted to the ancestors of Mahannah by an imperial firman.[1]

Mahannah was said to be of a very choleric disposition. He was active, though now far advanced in life, and was esteemed a brave man. He had been married three times; one wife only survived. Domestic disputes were extremely frequent in his tent, and were managed on both sides with all the eloquence that generally accompanies them in Europe.

On Tuesday morning, at dawn, the party in the tent arose, and, adjusting themselves, assembled in a ring round the fire. Coffee was served, and orders were given for striking the tents, and for proceeding towards a spring in the south-west, in order to water the cattle. The extraordinary time during which it

[1] Subsequently, the Wahabees, having been defeated by the son of the Pasha of Egypt, were compelled to quit the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, and the pilgrimage was again performed. The camels that were furnished by the Bedouins were as follow, according to a memorandum I took from the mouth of one of Mahannah's people at the close of our journey:—Nasar's tribe, 1,000; Dookhy Weled Aaly, 1,000; El Hawâreh, 2,500; Ismaar Shaykh Gerud, 400: Tulâa, Chief of Suchay, 1050: Regeb, Selim, and Abas, shaykhs of the villages of Caryetayn and Hems, a proportionate quota.

is asserted a camel can support thirst, has been often mentioned by travellers. The Bedouins in the winter let them go for one hundred and forty hours, and, on the present occasion, it was the fifth day that they had not drunk. But they appear to me in this respect to differ very little from other animals ; for, during winter and spring, it is the moisture in the herbage which renders drink unnecessary, as happens to sheep, which, I am inclined to think, get no water for an equally long interval. But, in the dry season, a camel must drink as often as an ass ; and I consider what has been advanced of the camel's carrying water in its stomach to be a legend, and of its marvellous property of enduring thirst to be much exaggerated. As to the horses of the Bedouins, they too are accustomed, at this season, to an abstinence of from forty-eight to sixty hours, which latter period, however, is the greatest. They are generally watered from holes in rocks, or puddles, which are sometimes not to be found short of one or two leagues from the tents ; and, these failing, from the water-skins, or, as a last resort, from the udder of the camel, although I was not an eyewitness to this.

The order of march observed by the Bedouins is nearly as follows ; the shaykhs, and such as are masters of a tent, retire to a small distance from it, and, squatting on the ground, with their mares standing by them, and their spears planted, smoke their pipes, whilst their women strike the tent. In Mahannah's

family there were slaves also, who assisted in the hand labour. These are the descendants of blacks purchased during the flourishing state of the tribe, in the days of the Mecca pilgrimage. They differ in nothing from other Bedouins, excepting, as it is said, that they cannot marry a white Bedouin; for the offspring of slaves, I was told, are free among the Bedouins, although not among the Turks.

The women, then, having rolled up their carpets, packed their kitchen utensils, and struck their tents, load the pack-camels, and prepare those intended for mounting. For this purpose, the rich families are provided with a machine, rude in its construction but not altogether devoid of beauty in its appearance. It consists of two short ladders, each about a yard in length, curved outwardly, narrow below and wide above, and attached to each other by transverse staves; these are bound to the pack-saddle, and this saddle is fixed on the camel's hump, and is girthed on by old rope and hide-thongs. Worsted web ribbons, with gaudy tassels, dangle from the top. On the ceremony of a marriage, this machine is highly decorated; but, not having witnessed such an event, I am unable to describe exactly how. The strongest camels are always chosen to carry it. Those who are unprovided with this machine roll a carpet in the shape of a bird's-nest, which they tie on the camel's back, and look, when seated in it, not unlike a sitting hen.

The camels are without bridles or halters; but, accustomed to the call of the herdsman, they march along with a docility that leaves no cause for fear to those who are mounted on them. The herdsman himself rides on a species of pack-saddle, something like the tree of an hussar saddle, and sometimes guides his camel by means of a rope passed through the cartilage of the nose. All being ready, each family marches separately, and the desert becomes a moving scene for some miles round. The horsemen proceed at a foot pace, from which they never vary, except when occasional races take place to gain a spot where water is known to lodge, or when the youths tilt with each other for amusement. The Bedouin girls are seen dropping from the backs of the camels to drive in those that stray, and then, seizing the animal's tail, remount with an agility quite astonishing.

Sweet and graceful was thy form, black and full, like the antelope's, were thine eyes, lovely Raby (for thy father called thee by name), as thou didst vault from the ground, and, placing thy naked foot on the projecting bone of the camel's leg, didst bound on his rump again. Hard seemed such a seat for thy delicate limbs; and the undulating motion, communicated to thy body by the lengthened steps of the unwearied beast whose back thou didst bestride, had a strange moving look through the clear atmosphere of the desert which thy sylphlike form intercepted. Diana's nymphs were gross peasants to thee, light aërial vision!

And was it a natural feeling of goodness, or the coquetry which wicked man too readily attributes to all thy sex, that made thee turn thy winning look on the stranger? How could a single smile of thine leave so lasting an impression, that he forgets it not after a lapse of full thirty years? Did it not seem to say—Why gazest thou on me so earnestly, gentle cavalier? I know I am pretty, for many chieftains of my tribe have already (albeit I am but fourteen years old) asked me in marriage: but my father demands fifty camels and a mare of pure breed for my dowry, and he that would have me must pay the price of my charms. And I murmured to myself, Raby, why dost thou expose those beautiful features, those nascent beauties which thy youthful neck betrays, to the rays of the hot sun? Be more niggardly of thy charms, for few can boast such as thine.—A stumble of my horse recalled me to myself; but Raby was still before me, and from time to time occupied my thoughts.

And here, I reflected, is a brown creature, full of life and activity, whose utmost accomplishments amount to gathering fuel, fetching water, pitching a tent, baking, cooking, and tending herds of camels, or feeding her father's mare. Yet she is esteemed valuable, and must be bought at a high price: whilst, in my own country, fair maidens, with complexions white as the driven snow, versed in literature and the fine arts, can find no market for their persons, and go down to the grave deploring their single wretchedness! Whence

can such an anomaly proceed? if it is not that, in the one case the wife repays the purchase by her services, so useful to the comfort of her husband, and in the other a partner often becomes dear to him that weds her, by the expenses she entails on him, without any remunerating qualities which can contribute to his welfare, or a knowledge of domestic duties to ameliorate his condition. An English maiden must be dressed in a robe of Bank-stock receipts and India-bonds before she is taken as a gift; a Bedouin girl, even *en chemise*, must be bought.

We passed a ruined village on the way, the name of which we could not learn. It was situate on a hill, and contained the remains of a fortress. On alighting, dibs and bread were served. Supper, on a large dish of rice as on the preceding day, coffee, and conversation concluded the evening. The wind was north, and, blowing through the crevices of the tent, left us little benefit from the blazing fire in the middle. The Arabs, shivering from the unusual cold which prevailed, seemed to make no scruple of exhibiting those parts of the body which decency teaches us to conceal, and unceremoniously raised their garments to warm themselves.

In the morning the tents were struck, and the march was continued in a south-west direction for five hours. At the close of it, a flock of sheep belonging to the Beni-Khaled Arabs, whose tents were at no great distance, passed us. This was one of the tribes in sub-

jection to Mahannah. Nasar, the son of the emir, ordered a Bedouin who was near him to seize a sheep. The man immediately launched his bludgeon at the poor animal,[1] and broke one of its hind-legs. Thus lamed, it was pricked on by the point of the lance, until, after about a quarter of an hour, we came to our encampment. It was killed and skinned in an instant, and a sparerib being cut off was thrown on the embers. It was turned occasionally with the hands, and, when half roasted, it was removed and placed on the bare ground, where, without bread or any single appurtenance of the table, each person tore off his portion and devoured it with canine greediness.[2]

We had now arrived within two leagues of the spring which the Bedouins were in search of. The village of Caryetayn was four miles off in a southerly direction. At daybreak on the 7th, the greater part of the camels were driven off to water, whilst a few,

[1] These bludgeons are what an Irishman would term a shilalee, with a round knob at the end: they are called Nabût.

[2] I was on one occasion witness, whilst in the Desert, to the setting of the leg of a sheep, which had been accidentally broken. This was effected by means of two splints of rough wood. To save the animal from injury in walking, a network, consisting of ropes passed lozenge-fashion, as is sometimes seen on jars in England, was contrived, so as to go round the sheep's body, and the sheep was then slung on one side of a camel, where it was carried in a state of great suffering. Whether it recovered or not I could not learn.

under the conduct of Nasar, Mezyad, and Hassan, sons of the emir, were sent to the village to get a supply of provisions; for the stock was now so low that nothing but dry bread had been served out, and there was not even water to make coffee. M. Lascaris accompanied Nasar, being desirous of seeing the village. At nightfall the camels arrived from the spring, but not those from the village. The day having, by me at least, been passed in fasting, I was now made sensible of the relish that hunger can give to fare however homely, and played my part on the hot bread-cakes at supper with an avidity little inferior to what I had remarked in the Bedouins.

At sunset there was a fall of snow, which continued all night, and, exposed as we were to the severity of the weather, rendered us very uncomfortable. The horses, as usual, were tethered in the open air, and suffered much from the cold.

Next morning, the snow covered the ground about six inches. We slept and warmed ourselves alternately through the day. The camels from Caryetayn had not yet returned; for, as the Bedouin has no other guide but landmarks,[1] when the atmosphere is

[1] It is affirmed by many travellers that the Bedouins travel by the stars by night, and they are all made out to be astronomers; but, by night, they can obtain a general notion of their direction, as any common person will do in any country, and by day they rely on landmarks only. They know the use of the compass, and were only surprised at the one I showed

obscured, he cannot travel. There was literally nothing to eat in the emir's tent, and the kindness of one of his relations, named Casem, supplied me with a supper.

The unusual fall of snow argued the severity of the winter; for, in the Desert of Syria, it is an exceedingly rare thing to see snow at all. A Bedouin boy, nevertheless, ran, stark naked, in the open air through it.

On the 9th, the weather cleared up a little, and the wind changed to the East, with snow occasionally. We were absolutely without provisions, and Nasar and M. Lascaris were looked for by me with the utmost anxiety, whilst the Bedouins seemed as indifferent as men who had all the luxuries they could desire about them. At noon, Nasar and his party returned, but brought back little with them; the villagers having refused to produce any provisions unless for money; for Caryetayn is a populous village, and could brave the anger of the Arabs. A few raisins were all the addition that could be made to dry bread. Nasar, Mezyad, and Hassan, had each something new upon them, which they had procured from the inhabitants of Caryetayn, half by threats and half by presents.

On the 13th, the tents were struck, and in the evening they were replanted on the ground occupied on the 7th. Our horses had not drunk on the pre-

them, in our second journey, on account of its smallness, being one of those which are of the size of a crown piece.

ceding day, and the whole care of myself and Hassan was to precede the tribe, in hopes of falling in with a puddle of water. But we were not fortunate enough to meet with one, and the poor animals would have again fasted, when, just as we halted for the night, a shower of rain fell, which we patiently endured with our backs turned to it, and, when it was over, galloped to an eminence about a mile off, upon which Hassan knew there was a hole in the rock where water generally lodged. We there slaked the thirst of the horses, and filled our water-bottles; but the water was so thick that a scullion-maid in England would have not thought it clean enough to wash her kitchen floor. However, necessity and delicacy are not akin, and we considered ourselves very fortunate.

It will be recollected that the ostensible purpose for which I had visited the Emir Mahannah was to cure him of a chronic complaint. The emir had now kept me eleven days, and had derived no great benefit from the remedies he had used: still, whenever mention was made of departing, he grew out of humour, and signified that he expected to be first cured; for an Arab has a firm idea that everything is possible to medicine. His sons tormented me in another shape. They would frequently tell me, half joking and half serious, that I was among a pack of robbers; that, as Franks visited Palmyra only to find treasures, I must not expect to get off without making them a present, with other expressions to the like effect. I was there-

fore somewhat alarmed, and began to be apprehensive for my safety; the more as the march had always been from, instead of towards, my destination. Resolved, however, to make a bold push, and anxious to visit Palmyra, I determined to be amused no longer with excuses, and, at all events, to steal off; so, imparting my design to Hassan, I desired him to hold himself in readiness. But he knew it would be more dangerous to offend his master, than to disoblige me, and told Mahannah what I had resolved on. Thus thwarted, it was necessary to try another scheme, and I represented to Mahannah that it would disoblige Lady Hester if I were any longer delayed in executing my mission to Palmyra. The fear of losing the presents which he expected from that quarter operated on his avarice, and I obtained permission to depart. M. Lascaris, during this my dilemma, had been of little service to me, fearing to embroil himself with Mahannah, whose friendship he was desirous of securing, in case of fixing his residence at Palmyra. He would not accompany me, as he had sent for his wife to join him, and he was obliged to wait for her before setting off. I therefore left him at the tents.

On the morning of the 14th, accompanied by Hassan only, I mounted my horse before six. We were furnished with two leather bottles of water and some raisins; and Hassan, as before, carried my carbine. For an hour, we proceeded north-east by east, until we crossed into the path of the salt caravans, which

constantly trade between Palmyra, Hems, and Hamah. We then took an easterly direction. About ten, it began to rain.

About noon, as we were proceeding at a smart foot-pace, Hassan observed on the ground some fresh camels' dung. This seemed to attract his attention; and presently other indications of the same kind rendered it evident that somebody was travelling in the same direction before us. Hassan occasionally preceded me a few paces to reconnoitre. In this way we rode on for about an hour. On a sudden, he pulled up his horse, and, following the direction of his eyes, I espied something like the heads of men. He made me observe them, and said, "Perhaps they are robbers—be ready for a gallop." As we came nearer, we made out the supposed men to be two Bedouins and a camel partially concealed in a hollow. "Do as I do," was all he said; and putting his gun as in a posture ready for defence, although the rain that had poured all the morning rendered it absolutely useless, he advanced until we came abreast of them; they being about thirty yards out of the path. He then challenged them, and observing their motions, cried, "Push on," and immediately put his horse into a full gallop. I did the same. At that moment the camel rose upon his legs, with a man mounted on him, who pursued us, whilst the other robber levelled his gun at us, which, probably from the wet, snapped—for it did not go off. The mounted robber followed us about half a

mile, when, finding that he lost ground, and that his companion was far behind, he slackened his pace, and at last turned back.

About one o'clock, we came to some sand-hills, at which time we were abreast of the White Mountain, (Gebel el Abyad) two leagues off, in a northerly direction. These sand-hills continued for a league or more. We here saw some camels grazing, guarded by a Bedouin. Hassan spoke to him, and learned that he was of the Beni Omar Arabs, a tribe in subjection to Mahannah. We dismounted, ate a few raisins, and deliberated about passing the night with them, their tents not being above a league off: but at last it was determined to go on for Palmyra. We then entered a vast plain called El Mezah, bounded on the left by the White Mountain, and, on the right, by Mount Ayán. Vast as it was, its extreme evenness deceived the eye, and contracted its boundaries to the appearance of a valley. It seemed as if we almost touched the foot of the mountain which overhangs Palmyra, and which Hassan pointed to. "We have not above a league and a half to go," said I. "*Inshallah*," was his reply, in the Arabian manner; "if it please God;" and, taught by experience how equivocal an expression this was, I made up my mind for a double distance. Hassan's horse was nearly knocked up, and it was necessary to remove his wallet upon mine. The plain, for the first league, has some patches of turf, but afterwards presents a dry, cracked, barren surface,

totally destitute of vegetation. It appears that the soil is impregnated with salt, as is the plain which I afterwards saw to the east of Palmyra. At sunset we reached its termination, and entered between two hills into a valley, where were to be seen the remains of a reservoir enclosing the fountain-head, from which water was once conveyed by an aqueduct to Palmyra. It is called Abu el Fawáres, and is mentioned by Wood and Dawkins, in their splendid work on the remains of Palmyra. This aqueduct runs for a league, and terminates in the Valley of Tombs, at which we soon arrived. This valley is shut in on both sides by low mountains.

The moon had now risen, and threw a gloomy solemnity over these ancient monuments of the dead, which continued for about a mile. As we approached the angle, where the vast mass of ruins (as I supposed) would burst on my sight, my bosom thrilled with expectation. We turned it, when, straining my eyes, I looked in vain for the grand objects which I had expected; for the straggling columns of the colonnade, sunk in a low disadvantageous spot, were hardly to be discerned. Other feelings, which hope had for a moment drowned, again took possession of me. I recollected that I had been twelve hours on horseback, that I was hungry and thirsty. Following my guide among huge masses of stone, and pillars and fragments of buildings, towards the Temple of the Sun, we came to the gate, which we found shut; nor was it opened until Hassan

had made himself known. Then, turning down a dirty lane, we reached the mud cottage which was to be my residence at Palmyra.

The lintel of the cottage door was part of a sculptured entablature, and an elegant Corinthian capital, turned upside down, formed the horse-block. The cottage itself consisted of a small chamber, twenty feet by twelve. In it was Hassan's wife, her father, four children, two camels, and a donkey. We received a friendly welcome, and found a warm fire, although the smoke, having no chimney to escape by, almost blinded me. I seated myself on the bare ground, and, whilst a cup of coffee was preparing, reflected on the miserable state of the present inhabitants of this once celebrated city. It was soon known that a Frank had arrived, and the house, in a few minutes, was crowded with people. A large mess of rice was put on the fire, and a message came from the shaykh of the village, to say that, if I stood in need of anything, what he could command was mine. I requested a little firewood (as Hassan's wife had nothing but camels' dung for fuel) and a rush mat to put under me. By degrees my curious visitors left me. I ate a good supper, and went to bed in my clothes, surrounded by the camels, my hostess, and the family, there being only a partition breast-high between us. In the night, hearing the door creak, I raised my head, and saw one of the girls, about twelve years old, stark naked, who, having occasion to breathe the fresh air, did not think it

necessary to put on any of her clothes, which, according, I suppose, to Bedouin custom, she had stripped off at bed-time. This appeared to be matter of no surprise to anybody but myself: yet decency is one of the features of the female character in these countries.

CHAPTER V.

Reflections on the ruins of Palmyra—Wood and Dawkins's plates—Fountain of Ephca—Castle—Tombs—Cottage selected for Lady Hester—Visit to a curious cave—Justinian's wall—Climate and diseases—Salt marshes—Causes of fevers—Air and climate of Palmyra—Gardens, corn-fields, and trees—Sulphureous waters—Dress of the men; and of the women—Departure from Palmyra—Lady Hester sends Giorgio to look for the Author—Fall of snow—The party lose themselves, and sleep in the snow—Encampment of Beni Omar Bedouins—Hassan's unfeeling conduct—Pride of the Bedouins to ride on horseback—Encampment of Ali Bussal—False notions of the hospitality of Bedouins—Partridges of the Desert—Emir of the Melhem—M. Lascaris's scheme of traffic—Arrival of Madame Lascaris—Attack of the Sebáh—Wounded Bedouin—Giorgio goes to Palmyra—The Author returns to Hamah—Ruins of a triumphal arch—Snow-storm—A night in a cavern—Ruined village—Selamyah—Ruined mosque—Hardships endured by Bedouins—Miscellaneous observations on their character and manners.

I rose with the sun, and, eager to correct the unfavourable impression which the view of the ruins had made in the dusk of the evening, I begged of Hassan

to reconduct me to them. I sat down, still, as before, deceived in my expectations. As far as my memory served me, I found the engravings of Wood and Dawkins faithful; and I began to consider how it happened that, correct as to delineation, they conveyed an idea of the remains of Palmyra so much more favourable than the reality. It has already been stated that the ground on which they stand is disadvantageous. Edifices require elevation to set them off; and perhaps it may have struck some travellers, that, of all the vestiges of antiquity to be seen throughout modern Turkey, the Parthenon at Athens, and the Temple of Theseus at Sunium, have the most imposing appearance, owing to their position, each on the summit of a hill. It is not so with Palmyra. Situate, on the contrary, at the foot of lofty mountains, whose height renders all the works of art diminutive, its columns, if seen at the distance of a few hundred yards, dwindle to the size of tapers. Indistinct from the neighbouring mountains, they are still more so from the colour of the stone of which they are made: for it is of a yellow ochrish appearance, and the face of the surrounding soil is precisely of the same hue. Tints must be opposed to set each other off; so that, for want of this contrast, these celebrated ruins, so conspicuous on paper, are scarcely visible where they stand. And although the two artists had a right to give them as high relief as they could, yet have they been guilty of that species of

deception which exhibits objects under a false colouring, by representing them with an appearance of freshness to which they have long since lost their claim. Yet, when we reflect on the vastness of the materials which have been collected, as it were, in the midst of a desert, we are lost in astonishment. There are pillars of granite of a single block, which (say those who have made researches on these subjects their study) must have been transported from Upper Egypt. All the buildings were composed of stones of an enormous size; and there are ceilings yet remaining of a single slab. Fragments of pillars and their entablatures strew the ground, and are so numerous that we might imagine all the inhabitants to have lived in palaces. The building, called by travellers the Temple of the Sun, alone contains within its walls more than space enough for the present Palmyrenes.

Passing through the triumphal arch, which terminates the long colonnade under which I had seated myself, I slowly walked down it, and, inclining to the left, came, at the distance of about a mile, to the sulphureous spring, called the fountain of Ephca. There were formerly five springs at Palmyra; at present this alone remains of them all. A magnificent edifice might once have adorned its entrance; and the remains of an altar, as also the broken shaft of a pillar which lies close to it, lead to that supposition. But at this day the stream, which is about

two feet and a half deep, issues from the mouth of a rough arched grotto, from five to six feet broad and four feet high ;—a man must stoop to enter it. The banks of the channel near the grotto are above ten feet high, seeming to be elevated by the accumulation of rubbish ; for, after the stream has run about thirty yards, they sink to a level with its water.

Although it was the month of January, I stripped off my clothes, and entered the grotto. It widens from the mouth, and, about five yards in, is lofty enough for a tall man to stand upright. The smell of sulphur is faint ; the taste of it not perceptible. The heat of the water might be about 80° of Fahrenheit, communicating the least possible impression of cold on immersing the body into it. Advancing, the water deepens to more than the height of six feet, and the roof of the vault lowers ; but there is no increase of heat. My conductor was forward in recounting all the properties of the water ; the chief one was that of imparting an extraordinary appetite to those who drink of it ; but there were in his enumeration none medicinal, if this be not of that class. I brought away with me two fragments of the roof ; but, learning that they made the whole conversation of the village, and that it was believed I had the power of converting them into gold, I threw them away ; for the extraordinary price which some rich travellers have incautiously paid for fragments of ancient sculpture, intaglios, and the like, has given

rise to the supposition among the Arabs that Franks never would purchase so dearly mere stones, unless for the purpose of transmuting them into more valuable materials.

On the 16th, I visited the Saracen fortress to the west of the ruins. When it was known where I was gone, I was followed by about thirty or forty women and children, who pointed out the best path to me, and climbed up the pointed rocks with an activity that made me tremble for their safety. The castle is moated, and the bridge which formed the communication of the opposite sides being broken down, it required much pains to clamber up to one of the windows, the only entrance now practicable. The chief advantage of toiling up the mountain on which it stands is to enjoy the fine view of the surrounding country. To the east are seen the ruins; beyond them the salt marshes; and beyond these a plain, bounded by the horizon, and to which fancy lent an immeasurable extent: to the north, on the same chain on which the castle stands, is Mount Ebn Ali—so called from a small chapel erected on its summit in memory of some Mahometan santon of that name: to the west is the valley of Abu El Fewáres, and to the south, the end of Mount Ayûn, a chain which runs almost to Damascus. Descending from the castle, I entered some of the tombs, which are described so accurately by Wood and Dawkins. I brought away from them some few pieces of embalming silk, which

showed clearly to what a degree of perfection the manufacture of that article had reached in ancient times.

The process of embalming has something congenial to filial piety, and abates the horror which a worm-eaten corpse inspires. Those embalmed, after preservation for centuries, are sometimes found to have become a mass of odoriferous gum, and can be handled without disgust.

On the 17th, it rained the whole day. Confined within the walls of the Temple of the Sun, this opportunity was taken for examining such of the cottages as might be best adapted for the residence of Lady Hester. There were three that stood in the north-west angle of the temple, and these were chosen as the most commodious. The seven pillars are those delineated in one of the plates of Wood and Dawkins, as occupying the angle where we still found them.

The people of the village had talked a great deal to me about a cavern three leagues from the ruins, which contained, they said, several curious natural productions: accordingly, on the 18th, I joined a party who were going thither to bring away alum, sulphur, and vitriol. The company was composed of thirty-nine persons, the greater part armed with muskets and matchlocks, to defend themselves from the Bedouin Arabs, should they meet any. They were mounted on asses, and carried empty sacks. The shaykh ac-

companied us, purely out of civility, as he said, to me (who had been strongly recommended to his care by Mahannah), but, in reality, to secure his share of the profits. The cave had been represented to me as extremely curious; the road to it is due north from the ruins, parallel with the chain of mountains which runs north and south from the castle until it unites at right angles with the White Mountain, at the foot of which the cave in question is situate. On the highest part of the ridge of this chain, there is a Mahometan shrine, already alluded to, called Ebn Ali. Upon these mountains are found hyenas and stags, whose antlers, of which Lady Hester some months afterwards obtained a pair, show them to be of a prodigious size. Under the santon's tomb is, as I was told, another cavern worthy the examination of the traveller. Nearly abreast of it, and about a mile distant in the plain, is the *mkatâa*, or quarry, where the Palmyrenes obtained their stone for building. The rock is quarried with great regularity: several masses lie hewn as if ready for removal; and such is their size that they would exceed the power of common machines of the present day:—they were of a pink-tinted carbonate of lime.

Arrived at the cave, every one pulled off all his clothes, excepting his shirt and drawers. The mouth of it was perhaps thirty feet in breadth, and ten or twelve in height: it continued of these dimensions for a short distance, when two shafts went off in

opposite directions: one of these we entered by a hole, through which we crept on our stomachs; for it appeared at this point to be choked up by rubbish from the falling in of the rock. We had with us rudely-made torches and bees-wax candles, brought for the purpose. The main shaft had been worked nearly strait, and was rudely arched; the depth of it might be from thirty to fifty yards. From it issued occasionally lateral excavations, but apparently of subsequent date to the principal one, and in some places the matrix of the rock was strongly sulphureous, for it took fire on holding the candle awhile to it. Beautiful efflorescent crystals of plumose alum, resembling tufts of snow-white silk, hung from the roof in certain places, or jutted from the sides, but were too perishable to bring away. In parts a yellow clay, wet and plastic, was found. Portions of both the sulphur and the alum were collected by the Arabs, who sell them in the manufacturing towns for the use of dyers. In some places, the walls of the cave were nearly pure argil. Thus the production of alum is constantly taking place in the cave from the presence of the principles necessary to its formation; viz. sulphur and alumine. I likewise found some pieces of selenite. The heat was so suffocating that I could not remain in long. We next visited the shaft running in an opposite direction to the first two: it was less deep and more irregular. In this the roof

caught fire, wherever a taper was applied; an experiment I did not choose to see repeated a third time, for fear of suffocation from sulphureous fumes. The cave is of high antiquity, according to the tradition of the inhabitants, and probably coeval with Palmyra. It is well worth examination, and will repay the curiosity of the general traveller. The asses being all loaded, we returned in the same order in which we came.

The 19th and 20th were spent in walking over the ruins. In the plan of Palmyra, so accurately taken by Wood, as far as it goes, the remains of the wall of Justinian, to the east and south-east, are not inserted. They are, however, very distinctly visible, running north and south, distant a little more than a quarter of a mile from the Temple of the Sun. This seems to be the quarter of the private residences, as there are few fragments of columns hereabouts.

Having now gratified my curiosity, though not satisfied it, circumstances obliged me to think of departing. The ample accounts we possess of the ruins of Palmyra render it unnecessary to say anything on that head. The few observations I had time to make on its climate and present productions, on the manners and dress of the inhabitants, as well as on their diseases, may be comprehended in a very brief space, and they can apply only to that season of the year in which I made them.

Palmyra stands in latitude 30° 20' north. To the west and north it is sheltered by mountains. Towards the other two cardinal points it looks over plains bounded by the horizon. The salt marshes lie to the east, about one league off, and their extent varies according to the winter rains. The mountains and plain are bare of trees. To the south of the Temple there were a few orchards; and a few acres of land were sown with maize and corn. These are irrigated by the waters of the sulphureous spring.

As far as my observation went, those places in the Levant are healthy which are not surrounded with gardens and orchards, whilst such as are encompassed by them demonstrate in the looks of the inhabitants the diseases to which they give rise. Thus, at Damascus, at Tripoli, at Hamah, and such towns as are celebrated for their gardens, the season is marked by the prevalence of intermittent and remittent fevers, which are always obstinate, and sometimes, from bad treatment and other circumstances, assume a malignant character. For, as the manner of irrigating grounds consists in laying them under water by trenches dug in a variety of directions, an artificial marsh is thus created, the evaporation of which, in the great heats of autumn, gives rise to noxious effluvia and to evening damps which check perspiration. On the contrary, such places as are built on mountains or at the foot of them, or in bare plains, enjoy a fine air; and this because the close of

the day brings with it no sudden change of temperature, and no unwholesome vapours.[1]

Of this latter class is Palmyra: hence it is renowned among the Arabs for its fine climate. During a residence of six days, from the 14th to the 20th of January, in the very depth of winter, I found that it was agreeable to undress and bathe in the open air, and that a few showers, always succeeded by sunshine, and once a slight fall of snow, constituted the utmost severity of the season, in the severest winter that had been known for half a century; whilst, on the same days, the snow at Hamah, in the same parallel of latitude, was six inches deep, and covered the ground for some time: nay, the inhabitants of Tadmûr went so far as to say that the very appearance of snow was a miracle among them. It is mentioned by Wood that, in the month of March, the heats were very great: it is therefore likely that in

[1] This observation is not to be taken in its full extent as far as regards places on mountains; for there the sudden chill of the air, after the sun's rays are withdrawn, condenses the moisture elevated from the plains, and as suddenly checks the perspiration. Hence it has happened to me, in Syria, to find intermittents prevalent in very elevated spots, where not even a pool or a level spot was to be found for leagues around; arising (certainly not from marsh miasmata, but) from the sudden effect of cold on open pores, which, after all, is probably the cause of intermittent fevers in marshy situations, owing to the damp cold which they generate, rather than to any specific quality in decayed vegetable matter.

autumn they are scarcely less intense than those of Egypt.

The few orchards and cornfields which the inhabitants had, and which were no more than scraps of ground scooped out among the ruins, served to show that, with little care, all the plants of Syria might be reared on this spot. Wood mentions having seen fig-trees there; at this time there were perhaps a hundred. Palm-trees are numerous, and ripen their fruit, which they will not do at Damascus; I ate of their dates. To olive-trees the climate seems peculiarly congenial, as they have a richness of foliage not observable elsewhere. Pomegranates, sweet melons, water melons, almond trees, with apples and apricots and some other fruits, were also to be found.

From these observations it will be concluded that the inhabitants of Tadmûr are subject to few or no diseases; and this would be the case, generally speaking, were it not that great filth and great poverty sometimes engender them. From the latter cause arises the habit of sleeping on the bare ground, and hence rheumatism is very common. From the former it happens that ophthalmia, once established, is almost sure to terminate in blindness; for a constant irritation is kept up (as has been mentioned elsewhere) from the dust of the streets, as also by the application of dirty cotton rags and handkerchiefs.

A trial was made by me of the effects of the sulphureous water on the human body from a constant use

of no other beverage; but it produced no sensible change. That my appetite was unusually good, as it is in general with all travellers at Palmyra, arose without doubt from the air of an open country; and the same was the case under the tents of the Bedouins. Whether the vicinity of the salt marshes has any share in producing this effect, requires a longer experience than that of six days to determine. Certain it is that they do not seem to communicate any bad properties to the air, although so extensive an evaporation is going on from them.

The inhabitants of Tadmûr are to be considered as natives rather of the Desert than of the towns. They are the offspring of Bedouins; their dress is the same; but I thought the Palmyrenes were of a stouter make. With both, open violence or craft are considered as legitimate means for effecting their purposes. The men and women occasionally bathe in the warm spring. The women are celebrated for their comeliness; and it is not unusual for the chiefs of the Bedouin tribes to give a very rich dowry of camels and sheep for a Palmyrene maiden. It was remarkable that the women, in the month of January, wore only a shift, covered in a few instances with the woollen cloak, or abah: it is likely therefore that in summer they almost dispense with this slight covering. Their shifts are of coarse cotton, coquelicot-coloured, like Indian-silk handkerchiefs with white spots. They are fond of beads, and pride themselves on an enor-

mous gold or silver ring (representing a coiled serpent) which is passed through the cartilage of the right nostril, and which, from its exposed situation, is often torn out. Some of these rings are three inches in diameter. They wear rings also on all the five fingers ; likewise glass and silver bracelets and jamblets.[1] The lips, the cheeks, the fore-arms, the hands, and sometimes the feet, perhaps too the chest, and even the abdomen, are tatooed.

They feed very grossly, but less so than the Bedouins : husked wheat, raisins, dibs, eggs, and sometimes rice, are their common dishes. They set pounded wheat to stew in a small-mouthed pipkin, or in a covered jar, all night, and then eat of it : this they call bûrma. They make *kubby* by pounding together husked wheat and minced mutton, or goats' flesh, in a mortar : this they mould into hollow spheres, and boil or fry.[2]

[1] Rings of silver, worn just above the ancle in the manner that bracelets are worn above the wrist. The bracelets and jamblets are generally one solid ring, not tight, but moveable up and down. They are passed on the arm or legs, generally in youth, by soaping the extremity of the limbs, and by repeatedly rubbing them upwards until the rings slide over, where they remain until death or until they are filed off; for they scarcely can be removed in any other way.

[2] I learned here the composition of an excellent sweet sauce for hare, which was made by pounding stoned raisins in a mortar and boiling or stewing them in chopped onions and butter, putting in the raisins when the butter and onions are first stewed. It is then kept over the fire for a few minutes, and is scarcely to be distinguished from currant jelly.

Whilst I was at Palmyra, Mfáthy, one of Mahannah's shaykhs, came after me, furnished with a letter from Mahannah, in which I was enjoined to cure Mfáthy of a chronic complaint as speedily as possible. The letter was a curiosity, since few persons, I believe, have seen the handwriting of a Bedouin chieftain: and his style was not very courtly.

Having made such examination as I thought necessary at Palmyra, Hassan and I, accompanied by four Bedouins of the tribe of the Beni Omar, who were going to the same point of the compass as ourselves, left Palmyra on the 21st of January. The sky was cloudy, and it was unusually cold. We watered our horses at the spring of Ephca, and, taking a north-west direction, crossed the vale where is seen the reservoir of Abu el Fawáres. About noon we reached the small chain of mountains which bounds the valley, and entered upon the Mezah, that extensive plain which has been already mentioned in the road to Palmyra. Crossing the north-east angle of it, we arrived in one hour at the foot of Gebel-el-Abiad.

Here it is necessary to carry the reader back a little, that we may see what Lady Hester had been doing during my absence from Hamah. I had promised her to write whenever an occasion presented itself; but the season of the year had prevented any one from going to Hamah, and I had had no opportunity. She therefore began to grow uneasy about me, and resolved to

despatch Giorgio, in order to ascertain what had become of me. An Arab or two of Mahannah's tribe, then at Hamah, were hired to conduct him, and it was given out that the object of his journey was to carry me some medicines, which I stood in need of for Mahannah's cure. His guides accordingly brought him safely to the tents of that chieftain, who informed him whither I was gone. Giorgio's instructions being to find me out, and to go on to Palmyra, he was furnished by Mahannah with another guide, a black, named Selûm, who rode before him on the same camel, with a horseman by his side.

I had scarcely begun to ascend the mountain with my party, when Hassan and his companions descried, at some distance, descending in the direction we were going, what appeared to be two or three horsemen. In a quarter of an hour we were come so near to each other that I could distinguish two men mounted on a camel, who presently stopped the camel and got off, whilst the beast remained kneeling. With them was a horseman, who kept his seat. We were more numerous than they, yet Hassan and the Beni Omar Arabs advanced very cautiously. When within hailing distance, the Bedouin with the camel called out to us, and at the same time posted himself behind the camel, with his matchlock lighted, and taking aim at us. Hassan knew his voice, and halloed to him by name:—it was Selûm, the black; and immediately both parties recognized each other. But what was my surprise to

find Lady Hester's servant, Giorgio, there, dressed in the Bedouin costume, and as much metamorphosed as myself.

He explained to me, in a very few words, the object of his journey, and showed me the box, containing medicines and other articles for me, which was fastened on the camel's back. But, when I told him he must return with me, Selûm, his guide, and the horseman with him, said that they were bearers of a letter from Emir Mahannah to Tadmûr, and that they could not turn back until they had delivered it. What was to be done? there was no time left for deliberation; for our four companions, the Beni Omar Arabs, had kept on their way, and it was absolutely necessary not to let them get out of sight, as the track we were going was infested by robbers, and parties of a hostile tribe, it was reported, were abroad. I resolved, therefore, that the lad, Giorgio, should mount behind me, as Hassan's horse was weaker than mine and could not carry double, and that Hassan should take the box; nor did it cost little pains, deprived as we were of cords or straps, to fasten the box on: indeed, it could not be done without transferring to my horse our barley and tethering pins. Selûm then informed us in what direction Mahannah was encamped; and, wishing him good by, we hastened after our companions.

Just at this time it began to snow. Our road wound through the mountain, in the dry bed of a torrent. A

forest of scattered turpentine trees grew in and about it. As we ascended, the cold and snow increased; and, the atmosphere being obscured, our Bedouins, having no longer their landmarks to guide them, were considerably embarrassed. We still kept in the torrent bed, and at last reached the summit of the mountain, whence we proceeded to descend, by a rapid declivity, into the plain on the other side.

The sun had now set. The servants' luggage chafed the horse of my conductor so much, that he refused to advance; whilst my own, burdened with two riders, three pecks of barley, tethering irons, a small medicine-chest, and the little linen I had, seemed to support himself with difficulty. At last Hassan's horse made a dead stand, and neither words nor beating could urge him on; so he dismounted and carried the luggage on his shoulder, whilst Giorgio got off from behind me, and led the horse. As it grew dark, the glare from the snow, which now covered the ground, served but to confuse the appearance of surrounding objects. Hassan and Giorgio again mounted. For a time a faint path served to guide us, until, losing this, we gave ourselves up to the guidance of chance. Our troubles increased. Watercourses, steep acclivities, and burrows of the jerboa, which cover all the Desert, continually obstructed us. Cold and wretched, I feared that every trip my horse made would throw one of us off, and knew not how we should remount, benumbed as our joints had now become.

Hassan's horse was quite exhausted, and we deliberated on what was to be done. The other Bedouins, seeing no chance of bettering their situation, pulled up, and it was concluded that we must make our beds on the snow. The prospect was dismal. We had no water, no firewood, and only a few cakes of dry bread to eat. We had nothing to sleep on, nothing to cover us; no cave, no hole to creep into; no bush to lie under. These are moments when the imagination pictures nothing but dismal things. We were perhaps surrounded by enemies, perhaps removed leagues and leagues from any human being. The very Bedouins who had accompanied us were by trade mere robbers; and, whatever may be said of the protection they afford to such as have once put themselves under their care, I must confess I was not sure in my own mind that they would not be tempted to plunder us during the night. We gave our horses their feed of corn. I made Giorgio take his seat on one end of the deal box, with his back to me, placing myself on the other end, that from leaning against each other we might derive some mutual support and warmth. Hassan sat down by us, with the corn-bags under him. He and Giorgio soon fell into a doze, from which I occasionally awoke them, to prevent the danger of freezing to death. For my part, I could not get a wink of sleep; and the want of rest gave me a feverish heat, which saved me, in some measure, from the effects of the inclemency of the weather.

The morning of the 22nd was looked for with an impatience that can only be known to those who have found themselves in similar situations: it came at last. We resolved to diminish our luggage as much as possible. To this end we unpacked the deal box, threw the case away, and put its contents into the corn-bags; and, to relieve Hassan's horse, which seemed hardly capable of standing on his legs, these were added to the burden of mine. We now mounted, the servant being behind me, as before. The snow had ceased, but a thick fog darkened the atmosphere. Our Bedouins, however, had found out where they were, and could, in a manner, judge what their course should be. They hurried on, as on the preceding day, whilst we did our utmost to keep up with them: but the animals, exhausted by such continued suffering, were no longer equal to the task. The Bedouins continued to gain on us, and at length we lost sight of them, and saw them no more.

At this distressing moment, the fog cleared up, and our delight may be conceived, when, on a neighbouring hill, we saw a drove of camels. We made towards it, and were informed by the herdsman, that the Beni Omar Bedouins were encamped in a bottom hard by. Our spirits cheered up. We met other herds; and at last saw a woman grubbing roots for fuel, a certain sign that we were close to the tents. In a few minutes we came to the edge of a glen, where was a large encampment. In the spirit of Eastern hospitality, we

alighted at the first tent we came to, which was that of Shaykh Hamed, where we were civilly received. We warmed ourselves over a blazing fire: and, whilst we recounted the history of our night's sufferings, the shaykh listened to the tale with all the unconcern imaginable; these being, with the exception of the snow, the everyday adventures of this hardy people.

Our horses, too, more to be pitied than ourselves, met with as little compassion. As they had not drunk since leaving Palmyra, I urged the necessity of melting some snow for them: but Hassan forgot, over the fire, the misery of his beast, who, tethered in the front of the tent, stood shivering with the cold, and was so enfeebled that he could scarcely stand. "The horse is done for," was his expression,—"Yedebber Allah, the Lord will provide for him." This trait of inhumanity may serve as an example (among many others that I could quote) of the false notions that travellers propagate of the tenderness of Arabs for animals. "God is bountiful," they cry, and, tying the halter to the hind-leg of their mares, they turn them loose to find pasture and water where they can. Thus, the exhausted horse, tied close to us, came and almost licked our faces in token of thirst. The sight was too affecting; and I declared I would have some snow water, if no other was to be had. A boiler at length was produced, and enough snow was melted to assuage the most pressing calls of the poor animal.

To do me honour, a lamb was killed and served up

at sunset, cut in pieces, and boiled with bread. The shaykh, to mark his respect still more, would not sit down till we had eaten, but, placing Hassan and Giorgio with me, insisted on waiting upon us: and Hassan, that he might not be outdone in politeness, raked over the dish with his hand, to find a tit-bit to present to him as he stood by, whilst I did the same to his son: and thus they amused themselves until we rose, when they sat down to devour the remainder.

The next morning was snowy. The Beni Omar found no pasture for their flocks, and gave us to understand that they were about to decamp. Their course was contrary to ours, and we were at a loss how to act. I stated my difficulties, that our horses were no longer serviceable; our baggage heavy; and begged for a camel to carry it, offering to pay for the hire: but there was none to be had, and we set off in the same order as we had arrived on the preceding day. Consideration for the state of the horses induced me to walk, and to order Giorgio to do the same. Hassan, it will be allowed, had double cause for doing so too: but the pride of a Bedouin is to be on horseback; and, in order that the answer to the question, so often put from one to another among them, "Are you mounted, or on foot?" might be in the affirmative, nothing could ever persuade him to walk, though the groans of his suffering horse reproached him at every step.

We were, however, unusually fortunate this day;

for in half an hour we reached another encampment of the Beni Omar, and alighted at the tent of the shaykh himself. He was called Ali Bussal; and I was pleased that an opportunity presented itself of seeing a chieftain so renowned among the Bedouins for his prowess, and so dreaded in the neighbouring provinces, as the most formidable enemy to caravans that the Desert could produce. We passed the night with him. He was of a grave character in conversation; and his long white beard, joined with the solemnity of his manner, gave him the appearance of a saint more than of a robber. To compensate for his crimes, he was very religious, and was polite enough to insinuate to me that he esteemed Christians no better than dogs. Moslems are so accustomed to insult the followers of Christ, that it is always an effort when they condescend to put themselves on an equality with them.

Whenever Mahannah was at variance with the Turks of the towns bordering on the Desert, he sent Ali Bussal to plunder the caravans. Ali Bussal was caught on one occasion, and soundly bastinadoed by the governor of Hems: this, it may be supposed, had not increased his liking for the Osmanlis.

We had now obtained instructions where to find Mahannah; and, though the snow was deep, and the wounds on the back of Hassan's horse were so fetid as to infect the air around him, it was necessary to proceed; for a Bedouin extends his hospitality through

the night, but not willingly longer. Hospitality is a virtue of poor nations; a sort of convention for one party, where there are no inns, no houses, no towns, to offer what they would expect in return, should their own affairs lead them from home: otherwise, the stranger must starve. On these conditions, they share their mess with him; and it is a received usage, now strong as a law, that whoever presents himself during a meal, is invited to partake of it. Still it is often likely that him whom they feed they will finish by plundering—not openly; but they will continue to beg from him; or, operating on his fears, to induce him to give more than the value of what he has cost them.

We travelled about a league, and found some other tents, where we stopped for the night.

On the 25th, we quitted our host; and, after an hour's ride, reached the advanced tents of the Melhem. We continued in a south-west direction for two hours more, when we alighted at Mahannah's tent. On the way, Giorgio, who had a gun, killed two partridges of the Desert. They are seen in flights that may almost be mistaken for clouds: they are birds of passage; but I did not learn at what season they quit this country: they fly somewhat like plovers, and have pointed wings.

I was met by the emir with many kind expressions of the anxiety he had felt for my safe return. He was so far sincere, that, as he knew the case brought by the servant contained some trifling presents for him-

self, he was indeed anxious to have them in his possession. For when Giorgio, in his presence, on first reaching his tent, had inadvertently said as much, he did all in his power to induce him to open the box, although addressed to me. In a quarter of an hour after our arrival, he begged to be gratified with a sight of them: and when the sack was emptied, he grasped at them as a child would at sweetmeats. The cupidity of the Bedouins knows no bounds: and, during my absence, M. Lascaris had experienced the truth of this observation.

He had conceived a plan of carrying on a traffic in goods useful to the Bedouins, by establishing himself at Palmyra. Other views of a more extended nature also may be attributed to him, if we may believe M. de Lamartine. Be this as it may, in sending for his wife, he had desired her to bring with her a supply of such articles as were saleable in the Desert, and to be accompanied by an Aleppo Christian, named Fathallah,[1] whose knowledge of the language and of pedlary was to be useful, whilst his presence was to be a protection for her on the road from Hamah to the tents.

Madame Lascaris and this Fathallah happened to arrive a few hours after my return to the tents, on one of the most wet and windy days that I had ever seen.

[1] This Fathallah afterwards assumed the quality of a dragoman, and, from a MS. furnished by him, M. de Lamartine drew up his narrative of M. Lascaris's adventures.

An interesting young creature of thirteen years, named Katinko, or Catherine, (who passed as Madame L.'s servant, but whose genteel look and resemblance to M. L. raised a suspicion that she was his daughter) was likewise with her. Cold and drenched with rain, after having passed two nights on the wet ground with no tent to cover them, they were overjoyed at last to find themselves among friends.

To win Mahannah's favour, Madame Lascaris had brought with her presents for him in dress to a considerable amount. These were formally given to him, and in a moment the prince was equipped in his new habiliments. His sons likewise came in for their share, and it was evident that M. Lascaris had gone to the extent of his means to satisfy them all.

The weather, as I have observed, was very wet when Madame Lascaris arrived. Next day being fine, the travellers hung their wet clothes to dry. The emir, in the evening, finding himself warm by the fireside, threw off his pelisse, and, according to the usage common among Bedouins, gave it as a present to one of his people. He soon felt cold again, and, observing a pelisse which was hanging up to dry, he took it, and, putting it on, made it his own property. There was no remedy but to secure as quick as possible what remained.

It rained in the afternoon of the 27th. As there was no pasture for the camels, Mahannah was obliged to change his ground. We advanced in a north-east

direction, about one league; having, before the tents were struck, eaten some dry bread: and we had nothing but dry bread and treacle for supper.

The day was more uncomfortable than the preceding, and the rain penetrated the tent in every direction. Soon after sunset, an alarm was given that an enemy's party had suddenly appeared, and had already seized a drove of camels. In about five minutes, near fifty horsemen were mounted, and galloped off at full speed. Hassan, unobserved by me, had untied my horse, mounted him, and was galloping off too, when, catching sight of him, I told Mahannah, that if he did not order him immediately back, I would not fail to complain of his conduct. This menace had the desired effect, and the horse and Hassan returned. Fatigued as my horse was with his late sufferings, such an exertion would have killed him outright.

It seems that Mahannah had been apprised of the approach of this party, as the tents this day had been planted close to each other: whereas, on the preceding occasions, they had been scattered over a space of a square league. Half an hour had not passed when news was brought that the two parties were engaged. Sundry reports stated the number of wounded, how many mares were lost and taken, &c. The night was dark, and it rained incessantly. The Emir's son had started as he was, without even boots on his feet, and others without their pelisses. All the night we remained in suspense; and M. Lascaris

and I figured to ourselves the inconvenience we should experience, (to say no worse of it), if the hostile party should prove victorious.

In the morning, Nasar returned, and by degrees the other horsemen dropped in: we thus received a more correct account of what had happened. The Bedouin tribe of the Sebáhs were at war with some Arabs of the district of Horàn. These latter had made an incursion on the Sebáhs, whose tents adjoined ours; and, although the Anizys were not implicated in the feud, several persons had been wounded on both sides, before an explanation could take place. The Arabs of the Horán had seized some camels of the Sebâh; but, by the intercession of the Anizys, they were given up.

I visited one Bedouin who had received a wound in the calf of his leg from a lance. Alum, powdered with crumbs of bread, was his remedy. He refused to suffer me to handle the wound at all, and said he should soon get well. In fact, the extreme temperance and spare diet of the Bedouins render their wounds less dangerous than the same would be to a European.

The mare of one of the emir's sons could scarcely stand from fatigue. He wrapped her body in a piece of carpeting, with which he generally covered himself when he slept. Nasar caught a most severe rheumatism from head to foot, and I observed that this was one of the commonest maladies among them.

The inclemency of the weather, beyond what had

been known for many years, obliged me to remain a day longer with them. It was arranged that Giorgio should make another attempt to reach Palmyra in company with M. Lascaris;[1] and I, accompanied by my former guide, Hassan, set off on the 28th of January, to return to Hamah.

The weather was very cold, and sleet fell occasionally. We rode all day, and here a chasm in my journal obliges me to trust to my memory: for my fingers were so benumbed that I could not make notes. I recollect, that, while we were crossing that chain of mountains which I have called the Beláz, we passed the ruins of an edifice which looked something like a triumphal arch, and of Roman architecture. That part which I particularly observed was the portico, the pillars of which lay on the ground in the same order in which they had stood. There was an inscription, in very large letters, but of which I could only make out the letters IMP . . . .[2]

Hassan was not willing that I should loiter, and I was too benumbed and fatigued even to feel the curiosity natural to me on such occasions. Hassan

[1] M. Lascaris remained but a very short time in Palmyra. After a variety of reverses, he died of a fever in Egypt five or six years afterwards.

[2] I have in vain made researches on different maps after some place to which these ruins might belong. Mr. Burkhardt had told me that there was a temple in ruins on Gebel el Abiad; but I was now far away from that mountain.

had moreover told me several stories of the ferocity of hyenas and tigers in seasons so inclement as this; so that I expected to see one rush out upon us from every bush. Towards the afternoon, the severity of the cold augmented. We were still in the mountains, among a scattered forest of turpentine trees; but the sleet and snow, which drove directly in our faces, made it impossible to advance quickly. About four or five o'clock, we came to the mouth of a cavern, where we dismounted, and led our horses into it. They could just stand upright, but the water oozed through the roof upon them; and, for ourselves, we could hardly find a place free from wet whereon to sit. We had with us no provisions but unleavened bread and raisins. My pipe, which, under all difficulties, had been my greatest solace, served to beguile many hours of this night. Hassan would not light a fire, much as we stood in need of it; assuring me that there were too many robbers about to be able to do it with safety, as the blaze would betray us. It may be supposed what comfortless hours we passed in this situation.

Several times in the night Hassan peeped out of our den to see what turn the weather would take. As soon as the morning star was up, he told me we must start, as we had far to go. We tied on our wallets behind the saddles, which had not been taken off, and, on emerging from the cavern, I found that the sky promised a fine day, and that the morning star was

shining brilliantly. We rode along through scattered turpentine trees. The sun rose, and yesterday's snow, now thawed into drops of water, shone like diamonds on the branches. On a sudden we came on a low Bedouin tent, and, before Hassan could decide whether we were to advance towards it, or to shun it, a Bedouin, who knew Hassan, immediately made his appearance. They saluted each other, and talked together about ten minutes, when we continued our journey. A little farther on we saw a ruined village of comparatively modern date.

We soon quitted the forest and mountains, and entered on an almost level country. The day proved mild, and we travelled on briskly. Soon after mid-day, we saw, about a league distant, some camels, mounted by Bedouins. We inclined towards them, and I suspected that Hassan had been informed of their march by the Bedouin we spoke to in the morning, as he showed no suspicions respecting them. We joined them in half an hour. They were four Bedouins going to Hamah; and, accommodating our pace to theirs, we marched with them the rest of the day. We soon came in sight of the ruins of Salamyah, which we passed, leaving them six miles to the south of us: then the Castle of Shumamys, which we left behind us; and after sunset, reached a ruined mosque, where, amidst the dung of animals, that had, no doubt, under circumstances like our own, sought shelter here, we seated ourselves, supped on figs, which

the Bedouins gave us, and, wrapped in our abahs and sheep-skins, slept out the night.

The next day, about two or three in the afternoon, we reached Hamah. The Orontes had overflowed its banks, and on the bridge of Hamah the water reached up to our horses' hocks.

Thus, during the twenty-eight days which I passed in the Desert, for fifteen I never washed my hands, never changed my clothes, and slept in a tent open on one side to the snow, the rain, and the wind: often did I awake with my feet soaked in wet. Excepting the six days I passed at Palmyra, it was seldom I ate anything but unleavened bread, figs, raisins, treacle, and rice. People may marvel at the extraordinary hardships of the Bedouin Arabs, who support life with a pinch of flour and a few dates, and at the hundred other wonders related of them. That which is most difficult to bear is the want of water, which, even when it abounds, being collected from holes in rocks and puddles, is quite muddy; yet, in my case, novelty and hunger made me tolerate, if not relish, everything. These are the sources of the liberty of the Arab. Brought up from his birth to bear privations, to which the inhabitants of towns and villages would not submit, he reigns the lord of a territory which nobody envies him: and, whilst he plants his tent at pleasure over a measureless waste, enjoys a freedom bought at a price that few are willing to pay for it.

I felt proud to have contemplated the Bedouins, not as most travellers do by a cursory sight of some stragglers whom chance throws in their way on the high road, or in the market-towns to which they resort; but in their own homes, in their most numerous encampments, and under the roof of the Emir, Mahannah el Fadel.

A few observations, which presented themselves in the course of my stay among them, and which would have interrupted the thread of the narrative, will not be altogether misplaced here. The Bedouins are very ceremonious. Whoever joins a party generally makes three salutations, to which every person replies, "Salám Alëikûm, peace be unto you: Allah messekûmbel khyr, the Lord give you a good night—strength to you." To which the answers are, "Unto you be peace: A hundred good nights to you: God strengthen you also." When a person of consequence enters, all rise; and as, from the nature of a tent where the entry and exit is but a step, this takes place very frequently, the repetition of this ceremony becomes extremely tiresome. Whenever any one drinks, he says, "In the name of God;" and, as he removes the cup from his lips, he is saluted on all sides by "*Hannean*" (much good may it do you), He puts it down with "El hamd lillah—Praise to God."[1]

[1] In the fourth chapter of Ruth—"Boaz said unto the reapers—The Lord be with you: and they answered him the Lord bless you." This is exactly the salutation of the Chris-

I have seen an Arab, in selling a measure of barley, take God to witness in every shape in which an oath can be worded of his being a loser by the bargain; adding, as he measured it out, "In the name of God the merciful:"—yet, to the certain knowledge of the bystanders, he was making fifty per cent. by his goods. Their thieving disposition allows not a moment's peace to the traveller who is among them. His saddle-bags must always be with him, or they will be rifled: and, though he may sleep upon them, sit by them, and leave them only on pressing occasions for a moment, he may expect to find something missing. A plated curb to my bridle disappeared on the second night: my provision of barley for my horse soon followed, and I was obliged to content myself with the scanty pittance allowed me by the emir.

tians to this day: Allah mâkûm: Barak Allah. The salutation of the Mahometans is different: that is Salám aleïkûm, Peace be unto you—and the reply is Aleïkûm el salám—unto you be peace. The observance of this rule is so strict that if, in entering a room where Mahometans alone are seated, a Christian should presume to make use of the Mahometan salutation, they would not reply to him. We may infer that, when Mahomet first established his new religion, he endeavoured to draw a line between his proselytes and the Jews and Christians. Thus their day of worship was neither instituted on Saturday nor Sunday, but on Friday: so he appears to have appropriated a mode of salutation to them. Circumcision he did not get rid of, because he claimed to be a descendant of the patriarchs who had instituted or adopted it.

CHAPTER VI.

Hamah—Inclemency of the weather—Preparations made by Lady Hester for her journey to Palmyra—Conical cisterns—Nazýf Pasha—Abdallah Pasha—Muly Ismael—The governor of Hamah—Appearance of the Plague in Syria—Motives of Lady Hester Stanhope for visiting Palmyra—Price paid to the Bedouins for a safe conduct — Pilfering; particularly by their chief Nasar—Order of march—Sham fights—Tribe of the Sebáh—Arabs on their march—Rude behaviour of Nasar—Gebel el Abiad, or the White Mountain—The Author rides forward to Palmyra—Alarm at Lady Hester's encampment—Her entry into Palmyra—Inspection of the ruins—A wedding—Dress of the women—Faydân Bedouins made prisoners—The escape of two of them causes Lady Hester to leave the place.

I paid Hassan the remainder of the sum agreed upon for conducting me, namely, 182 piasters. The whole cost of the journey, including every expense, was no more than 215 piasters, being equal to about £10. I had been absent twenty-eight days. The horse which Hassan had ridden died, from fatigue and the wound on his back, three days after our return. I found that the general theme of conversation in Hamah was the extraordinary weather. It had

rained and snowed alternately from the 2nd of January up to the present time, and the snow had remained on the ground three inches deep. Soon after my return, water, in exposed situations, when still, froze a quarter of an inch thick, yet at mid-day the weather was beautiful and even hot.

As M. and Madame Lascaris were no longer at Hamah, I now occupied an apartment in a building that had formerly been the harým or private dwelling of Yahyah Bey, the governor of the place, who had been spirited away so suddenly, and where Mr. B. was already living.

Having satisfied Lady Hester on the practicability of her journey to Palmyra, she now busied herself very seriously in preparations for her departure, which she fixed for the ensuing month, when we expected that the weather would be settled. Her health, however, was not very robust at that time; and few persons in my situation would have pronounced her equal to such an undertaking. But I had had occasion to observe so frequently the great resources which she had derived from her personal courage and animal spirits against fatigue; and how often on a journey, her state was better than when halting; that I thought myself perfectly justified in consenting to the attempt. On the 10th of February I hired a boy, named Antonio, for my servant. Even then it froze very hard in the night, although the days proved fine and clear. About this time I observed in the markets a species

of bulbous root with a grassy leaf, which the inhabitants bought up with great avidity. I desired Ibrahim to procure me some, and, according to the manner of the country, I ate them boiled in milk, and found them exceedingly good. They are called in Arabic (at Hamah) khabbûs, and at Damascus hardyl; but I know not their botanical name.

February 12.—I rode to the west of Hamah one league, where I saw several reservoirs or cisterns of the shape of a sugarloaf, with openings at the apex large enough to admit a man. These, from numberless observations made at different places, I now supposed to indicate the former sites of houses and villages. They are always found on dry elevated ground, and served as repositories for grain;[1] they are always well coated with cement. Upon the hill, likewise, to the west and south-west of the city, on my return, I saw others; and, at the same spot, there were evident traces of a foss, or ditch: by which I was led to conclude that the city originally occupied this eminence, and was not, as at present, confined to the valley beneath.

Lady Hester had already received visits from most

[1] They are used for this purpose in some places even now. If the reader happens to have in his library Dr. Clarke's Travels in Syria, he may amuse himself by reading the Doctor's lucubrations on these holes, which are (as much of his conjectural learning is) somewhat ridiculous; yet, as such, they were more read than the dictates of common sense would have been.

of the first families of Hamah. Among these was that of Nasýf Pasha, who had once been governor of Damascus, and, from dread of the Porte, had been obliged to fly into Europe, as we have already mentioned when speaking of Hadj Ali, (v. i., p. 298.) Nasýf Pasha was one of the most comely men I ever saw. Having expressed a wish to consult me, I went, on the 13th of February, to see him. His conversation turned chiefly on vaccination, concerning which he was anxious to arrive at a certainty as to its alleged preventive powers. He spoke a few words of Italian: and although he had resided at Rome, Naples, Genoa, and Marseilles, he said, (will it be believed?) that he had seen nothing to induce him to alter, in a single instance, his mode of living, his mode of educating his children, his dress, his furniture, his sentiments, or even his agricultural or horticultural pursuits, if we except that he had raised in his garden a few strawberries, before unknown in that neighbourhood.

Another of the great families of Hamah was that of Abdallah Pasha, of the house of Adam, father of Ahmed Bey: but he lived a very retired life. There was the chieftain of the *delibash*, or *deláty*, (a kind of cavalry, who wear high cylindrical felt caps, and are known throughout Turkey by this distinction) named Muly Ismäel,[1] who proved, from his rank and influence, of the greatest service to Lady Hester, for whom he conceived a great friendship. He had a corps of deli-

[1] Mûly is explained by prince, captain, lord, or patron.

bash in his pay, whom he hired out to the neighbouring pashas as mercenaries. His ordinary residence was at Hamah, where he had a large mansion. Besides the number of wives allowed by the Mahometan law, he had several concubines: and these latter it was his custom to marry to those officers of his household whom he distinguished by his particular favour, imitating, in this, his sovereign and the grandees of the country. He was a very fat man. As he was independent of the magistrates appointed by government, he exercised even the power of life and death over his own people. I was consulted by him several times, and he readily made use of all external applications; but I never could induce him to take any medicine; and even though, upon one occasion, I made the experiment of obliging Giorgio first to swallow a pill before him, (being one out of three I held in a box, and of which the other two were intended for him) his distrust of mankind was not to be overcome, and he refused to take them.

The governor, or motsellem, of Hamah, was a certain Abdallah Bey, the son of a pasha: for Hamah is a city of the third rank, and generally has a distinguished person to rule over it. His predecessor was named Yahyah Bey, who had been carried off prisoner to Damascus, upon a suspicion of malversation, a few days before.[1] He was said to be one of the most artful men in Syria. Relying on his spies and his own

[1] Yahyah Bey, of the house of Adam; the principal people of the place were branches of this family.

acuteness, he had for a long time, without being in open rebellion, set the Porte and the pasha at defiance. Thus, he had detected seven plots in succession to entrap him: but this time the pasha of Damascus was more clever than he. Abdallah Bey never showed more civility to Lady Hester, Mr. B., or myself than was required by the firmâns of which we were bearers.

On the 15th, I went to the hamlet of Menäýn, about six miles from Hamah, where the inhabitants use the conical reservoirs, spoken of above, as reservoirs for corn. To the south-west of the city, two leagues off, is Kefferbûah, a Christian village. Mr. B. this day came back from an excursion to Museaf.

February 17th, Mahannah, the Emir of the Bedouins, came to Hamah. We were thrown into some alarm this day by an accident which befel M. Beaudin, the interpreter, who tumbled from his horse on his head, and returned home with his face much disfigured by the fall. Mrs. Fry, Lady Hester's maid, was also dangerously ill of a pleurisy.

There were epidemic fevers, at this time prevailing throughout the city, of which I make no mention here, because foreign to the object of the general reader. I was called in to the wife of the governor, Abdallah Bey, whom I found dying of a consumption: and it may not be useless to observe that I saw almost as many consumptions in the Levant as in England, although it cannot be denied that this disease is peculiarly fatal to our own country.

Selim, the son of Musa, the governor's secretary, was just recovered from a bilious remittent fever, and we rode out into the country together. We took a south-south-west direction, and at the distance of two miles we came to some grottoes, in and near to which were several females loitering about. These, he told me, were loose women, who (as we have already seen to be the case at Damascus) were required, from their bad morals, to live out of public view.

On the 25th of February the weather changed, and the nightly frosts ceased. There were occasionally some violent squalls of wind, but the sun was very warm.

On the 26th, Monsieur Narsiat, a French traveller who had filled some post in the suite of General Gardanne when on a mission in Persia, this day passed through Hamah, and dined with us. Lady Hester received from Constantinople fresh firmàns to replace those lost in the shipwreck. This evening it rained a little; and, until the 5th of March, there was cloudy or showery weather, with intervals of clear sky and hot sun.

It will be recollected that on the 10th of February I hired a Christian boy, named Antonio, to wait on me. I caught him, one day, filching some dollars out of a money-bag which lay at the top of a chest, the lid of which I had left open. He had secreted two in his girdle; and, when discovered, fell down, kissed my feet, and uttered such pitiable lamentations, that I

merely turned him away, considering myself somewhat to blame for putting temptation in the way of a youth by neglecting to lock the chest. In his stead I was resolved to try a Turkish servant, and I hired one, named Mohammed, for ten paras a day and his food, which was at about the rate of four guineas a year.

On the 7th of March there were great rejoicings to celebrate the recovery of Mecca from the Wahábys. The people of Syria, but more especially at Damascus, and on the high road to it, might naturally feel exhilarated at the prospect of the re-establishment of the pilgrimage to Mecca, by which their interests would be so much benefitted.

On the 9th there was a tremendous hurricane of wind. Istefán and Hadj Ali, two servants, were seized with remittent fevers. On the 11th there was alternate rain and sunshine, and by the 14th the weather seemed settled, fine, and hot. On the 18th we had the burning wind, or sirocco, when the heat was very oppressive.

It was at this period that we heard of the reappearance of the plague in Syria, after a suspension of ten years, or thereabouts. Its introduction was said to be as follows: in the spring it had broken out at Constantinople; about the 1st of February of the next year, a Tartar, arriving at St. Jean d'Acre from Constantinople, died of it there, and a Jew, buying his clothes, communicated the infection to his whole family. This was its first appearance in Syria; but, as the pasha and

the inhabitants took the alarm, several shops were shut up and some families quitted the town. Other precautions, such as placing a sentinel at the Jew's door, and preventing communication from without, stopped the disease in its birth. At Beyrout, a vessel came to anchor in the roads, having the plague on board. A barber went on board to shave the people, and subsequently died; but, as his house was put under quarantine, and as no goods were permitted to be landed from the vessel, the evil spread no further. Exclusive of these insulated attacks of plague, a malignant fever was raging at Tripoli, Beyrout, Sayda, and St. Jean d'Acre: and, although no diseases of a malignant character had shown themselves where we had been, still there was so much sickness prevailing, that every person of our party, with the exception of myself, had been ill in one way or another.

The time had now come, when, from the settled state of the weather, and from the completion of the necessary arrangements, Lady Hester resolved on departing for Palmyra. The arrangements, whilst actually going on, may be said to have lasted six weeks. Never had an excursion of pleasure a finer object: we were going to contemplate the most finished productions of art. Seldom, too, was witnessed a caravan of a few individuals on a more magnificent scale. Twenty-two camels were to bear the tents, luggage, firewood, rice, flour, tobacco, coffee, sugar, soap, saucepans, spare horse-shoes, and other provisions; eight carried water, and

nine corn for the horses. We were to be escorted by a tribe of Bedouins, headed by a prince's son; and our own cavalcade amounted to twenty-five horsemen. The most trifling want of the meanest servant was provided for, and the best equipped military expedition could not be more complete in all its parts than this. Although Lady Hester might be satisfied, from what she had herself seen, and from the report I had made her of the practicability of the journey, she nevertheless could not doubt that the risk of it would be great, as she carried with her things of value in the eyes of the Arabs, and went totally at the mercy of her conductors.[1] It was known that the Honourable F. North, afterwards Lord Guildford, Mr. Fazakerley, and Mr. Gally Knight had not thought it safe to venture across the Desert to which we were going, and others in the same way had been deterred by the picture that had been drawn of the dangers they would have to encounter. Even those who effected their purpose had experienced many hardships.

But, besides the wish of beholding broken columns and dilapidated temples, Lady Hester may be supposed to have had other motives peculiar to herself, and which could not actuate travellers in general. These columns and temples owed the greatest part of their

[1] Besides, she had to fear the attacks of the Faydân, a powerful Bedouin tribe, at war with the Anizys, and whose superiority had been established in a recent battle, of which mention has been already made.

magnificence to one of her own sex, whose talents and whose fate, remotely akin to her own, no doubt might move her sympathy so far as to prompt her to visit the spot which a celebrated woman had governed. She sought the remains of Zenobia's greatness, as well as the remains of Palmyra.

I must interrupt the narrative for a moment to insert two letters written by Mr. B. and Lady Hester to one of their friends, that the reader may gather from other hands some particulars of the nature of the journey we were about to undertake.

To Lieut.-General Oakes, &c., Malta.

Hamah, March 13, 1813.

My dear General,

In the month of October last I wrote you a letter from Aleppo, in which I stated that I was then on the eve of my departure to join Lady Hester at Hems, and that we proposed going from thence to Palmyra. Many unforeseen circumstances occurred which rendered it impossible to carry the plan into execution at that moment. From Hems, I went to Damascus, and, after having remained there near a month, I came to this place, where we have passed the winter. As Lady Hester was unwilling to relinquish the journey to Palmyra, we have been occupying ourselves in making the necessary preparations. We do not intend, as at first, taking an escort to guard us against the Arabs, but to put ourselves under their protection. By so doing, we shall gain a double advantage: we shall not only see the ruins of Palmyra, but shall have an opportunity of acquiring some knowledge of the manners and customs of the very curious inhabitants of the Desert. Perhaps you will not

think it very prudent that we should trust ourselves into their power. I am aware that no reliance can be placed on the honour or good faith of so uncivilized a people; but I do not think it is to their interest to be guilty of any act of treachery towards us. We have besides taken every manner of precaution against such an event.

Lady Hester has gained the friendship of Ishmael Aga, a great Delibash chief, who has guaranteed our safety. He is one of the most powerful men in Syria, and the Arabs stand in great awe of him. I think, therefore, that you need be under no apprehension of our being detained prisoners in the Desert. Mahannah el Fadel, the chief of all the tribes known by the name of Anizi, comes here to-morrow, in order to escort us. If Lady Hester succeeds in this undertaking, she will at least have the merit of being the first European female who has ever visited this once celebrated city. Who knows but she may prove another Zenobia, and be destined to restore it to its ancient splendour?—perhaps she may form a matrimonial connection with Ebn Seood, the great chief of the Wahabees. He is not represented as a very loveable object; but, making love subservient to ambition, they may unite their arms together, bring about a great revolution both in religion and politics, and shake the throne of the Sultan to its very centre. I wish you would come and assist them with your military counsel. How proud I should feel to learn the art of war under so accomplished a general! I only hope that Lady Hester's health will be able to resist the fatigue which she will unavoidably be exposed to. It will require, too, great management to keep the Arabs in good order; for, from the specimen that we have already had of them, I am afraid that we shall find them very troublesome. The greater the difficulties, the greater will be our merit in overcoming them. We have spent a most disagreeable winter here: the weather has been extremely severe for this climate.

Almost all the fruit-trees in the gardens of Damascus have been destroyed, and a tribe of Arabs, who inhabited the plain, have been overwhelmed, with their wives, children, and flocks, by the snow. The oldest men never recollect so severe a winter. To increase our misfortunes, the plague has come to this country. From the most correct information which we have received, it appears that it has broke out in Acre, Tyre, and Sayda. As there is constant communication, by means of caravans, between the coast and the interior, it will, I am afraid, soon be carried to Damascus, and from thence spread itself over the whole of the country.

The Turks take no measures to stop its progress: they are predestinarians, and say, that, as it is the will of God, they must submit to it with patience. I certainly do not admire this resignation; for it never can be the will of God that man should not endeavour to avert an impending evil. Such resignation is the effect of ignorance, and not of piety.

Mr. Pisani writes me word that it has made great havoc at Constantinople: upwards of twenty thousand souls have been carried off by it—a most dreadful mortality indeed! I lament the fate of this unhappy country, which suffers enough from the vexatious tyranny of its government, without having this additional scourge from Heaven.

As soon as we return from the Desert, we purpose taking refuge at Latakia, as being the most convenient situation in every respect: but if, unfortunately, the plague should come there before we can arrive, in that case we shall only have the alternative of retiring into the mountain, or of shutting ourselves up in Aleppo. Lady Hester dislikes the latter place.[1]

[1] Her ladyship's real motive for not going to Aleppo was the fear of the Aleppo tetter, which attacks strangers, and often disfigures the face.—See Russell's Aleppo.

She seems to have the same horror against the Franks as against the butter.[1] We must, however, hope for the best, and, like the Turks, submit with patience to the will of God.

In a letter which I wrote to you last November from Damascus, I begged that you would do me the honour of accepting half a barrel of wine, which came from the Dardanelles. I had hopes of being able to procure some of the celebrated Vino d'Oro, which is made at Zook, a village in the Keserwan. I gave a commission to a man to prepare a good quantity for me last summer when I passed through that place; but I have heard nothing more of it since that time, and I am afraid that he has forgotten me: I will, however, endeavour to get some before I leave the country.

By the last news which we received from Cairo, it appears that Mahomet Ali has been very successful against the Wahabees. He overcame them in a great battle, and has retaken the two holy cities of Mecca and Medina. I wish I had an opportunity of gaining some knowledge of the Wahabees. They are a very curious people, and I am inclined to think that, unless the

[1] The butter generally used throughout Syria is made by the Bedouin women in the spring, and brought in skins, on camels, for sale to the principal villages and towns on the confines of the Desert, whence it is carried to all the inhabited country, and every good housewife lays in a store for the year. To do this, the butter must have, of course, a great deal of salt in it; and, as butter is only used in cookery, its salt flavour does not deteriorate it. But the great difficulty Lady Hester had to contend with was to procure fresh butter for breakfast, and she consequently had to teach her maids to make it, without a churn, and without all the requisites for such a purpose. This was a fatiguing business with servants, who never showed any anxiety to learn.

Porte makes some very vigorous efforts to crush them at once, they are destined to bring about a great revolution, both in politics and religion, in the East. They have already extended their conquests with great rapidity over the Nedj country and Yemen. We know, too, that a nation of shepherds have always been looked upon as formidable. With them every man is a soldier; and their very amusements are the images of war. When they take the field, they move about with the whole of the nation. Their force is not diminished by being obliged to leave any of their people behind to cultivate their fields, or to take charge of the women or children. In ancient times, the Scythians and Tartars were feared by the Romans in the very zenith of their glory, and sometimes even overcame their legions.

The Turkish empire, which is in so weak and disorganized a state, and which has no regular or disciplined army to oppose them, may at some future period fall an easy prey to these numerous hordes, and the ancient Caliphate may be restored over Egypt, Syria, and Arabia. But I find that I am travelling out of my depth, and I am afraid that your patience is already exhausted. I will, therefore, conclude my letter by requesting that you will believe me,

My dear General,

Your most sincere friend,

M. B.

Lady Hester Stanhope to Lieut.-General Oakes.

Hamma, March 15th, 1813.

My dear General,

Just as I was about to despatch the letters which accompany this, a report of the plague being in different towns in Syria decided us to send expressly to ascertain the fact, which is exactly this, that it is spread all along the coast from Alexandria

to Tripoli; Latakia is the only port which is free from it at this moment, and it is making its way towards Damascus into the interior. I have so often talked of setting off that I must be actually mounted before I tell you so again. The Arab chief is now upon his road, and I expect him here in three days.

Respecting the plague, I feel no personal apprehension, but it is an anxious moment, as I am not alone. The desert has again been all confusion, but at this moment things are pretty quiet. I have great confidence in the Arab chief; the pasha sent an express for him almost at the same moment when mine arrived, and his answer was, "The Queen must be served first."

Mahanna waits my orders, just as Lord Paget with his cavalry would do yours were you to command a great army. Upon receiving them, he was to dispose of the different tribes under his command, in the way he thought most advantageous in case of an enemy; that is to say, not to leave a space, in a straight line, of more than a few hours, without tents. This settled, he was to set off and repair here with my second messenger.

The weather now is delightful, but I have suffered much from the cold this winter; it has been so severe as to have killed the camels and cattle which are not used to it, and for thirty years such weather was never known in this country.

March 19th.—To-morrow, my dear General, I mount my horse with seventy Arabs, and am off for Palmyra at last. I am so hurried I cannot write all I wish, but the Sir D. Dundas of Syria I have made a conquest of, and he insisted upon speaking to the Arab chiefs, and said he would cut off all their heads if they did not bring me back safe. I owe much to the kindness of this old fellow, who, since I have resided here, has

thought of nothing but how he could serve me. He tells me every day I must not leave off my Turkish clothes.

I have heard a few days ago from Captain Hope; he expects to come out again to the Mediterranean, and wishes to fetch me away from Syria if he can. His letter pray enclose to Admiral Hope at the Admiralty, unless you should have heard Hope has sailed; then send it to the fleet with Sir Sydney's letter. God bless you, my dear General; I hope on my return from the seat of my empire to find letters from England.

Yours most sincerely,

H. L. S.

Some days before this, Mahannah, as was said above, arrived at Hamah. Muly Ismael had warned Lady Hester of the danger there might be in having no check whatever on the Bedouins, who, in spite of their promises, might be led by their natural habits to plunder her. He told her that it was common for them, when they got strangers among them, to beg for every thing they saw, and piece by piece to reduce them to the same state of nakedness as themselves: for, in the early part of his life, having incurred the displeasure of the Porte, he had taken refuge among them, and could speak as to their habits from experience. A conference therefore was held with Mahannah in the presence of the Muly; and, as a price for the escort he was to afford Lady Hester across the Desert, it was settled that he was to receive a sum of money, which was to be deposited in the hands of Muly Ismael; and the deposit was made in Mahan-

nah's presence. The sum agreed on was 3000 piasters, equal to about £150, of which 1000 piasters were advanced at starting, and the remainder was to be paid on our safe return.

The 20th March was fixed for our departure. Each of the party was well mounted, furnished with a leather water-bottle, and a small pair of saddle-wallets to contain provisions. Every one of us carried, secreted about his person, a few sequins, in case of losing company, or of otherwise being separated from the caravan. All were in the costume of the Bedouins, and Mrs. Fry, Lady Hester's maid, was, like her mistress, dressed in man's clothes.

About ten in the morning we set off. Spectators lined the road for half a league out of the town; and some janissaries, whom the governor had sent to clear the way, had much ado to keep off the crowd. Of the reflecting part we had commiseration for our supposed folly and prayers for our safe return; many considering that we were going to the certainty of being plundered, if not to our destruction. By degrees we left them behind, and entered upon plains where the solitude that prevailed formed a striking contrast with the scene we had just quitted. Lady Hester was followed by the Bedouin chieftains, who composed her body-guard. Their long lances, plumed with ostrich feathers; their curling hair hanging in ringlets over their cheeks and neck; their gay-coloured keffiyahs, drawn over their mouths like vizors; their

lean mares; every thing about them was novel and calculated to set the fancy of all of us to work, as to where we were going, and what would be the issue of our journey—excepting myself, who had already trod the same ground. As we entered the Desert, those who before had not seen so vast a waste behind them looked as people may be observed to do, embarking on the sea for the first time in their lives, and losing sight of land.

We continued along the right bank of the Orontes for about two hours and a half, until we arrived at a hamlet called Genàn. Here we halted for the night, and were lodged in the cottages. I had scarcely dismounted, when I was led to one of them, where, on a rug, lay a dying man. The bystanders expected I should give him some restorative that would reprieve him from the hands of death; but, whilst endeavouring to make them understand that the case was desperate, the man expired, and I was suffered to depart. In about an hour, four or five women, with their faces whitened, their hair dishevelled, and with sabres in their hands, began, in an open space in the centre of the hamlet, a funereal dance accompanied by occasional howls. The men did not join in it, and seemed very indifferent about it.[1] The corpse was

[1] This dance was just such as is represented in the plates to Mr. Belzoni's work on Egypt, published 1820; and I think he has mistaken a funereal ceremony for a dance of recreation.

soon afterwards interred, but I did not see it put into the ground.

There were so many rats in the cottage where Lady Hester slept, that her maid became exceedingly terrified, and, quitting the room, sat in the open air during the greater part of the night.

We resumed our march on the morrow, the twenty-first, and followed, through a rich meadow, the course of a rivulet which empties itself into the Orontes at Genàn. In about seven hours we arrived at an encampment of the small tribe of Beni Hez, where also were a few tents of the Melhem, Mahannah's family tribe. These had been ordered here for the purpose of affording a station for us.

The next day we filled our skins with good water from the rivulet, and departed. The ruins of Salamyah[1] were on our left, and we were near to the ground where M. Lascaris and I had passed the first night on my former journey. The escort was now augmented by some Arabs from the Beni Hez. Nasar was unremitting in his attention to Lady Hester's commands; but, in all the rest of the caravan, wherever he appeared, much disputing prevailed. In defiance of all interference and of all contracts, the Bedouins had begun to pilfer from the moment of quitting Genàn. Most of the servants were in clothes quite new; and, if one of them happened to throw off a cloak, Nasar would lay hold

[1] The ancient Salaminias.

of it, and put it on his own shoulders. In vain the owner would beg for it back again. Nasar would pretend to be angry, and ask who dared refuse him anything? In an hour's time he would make a present of the same cloak to one of his own people: and then, in a few hours more, by fair or foul means, would obtain something from somebody else; not to keep it himself, but to give it away to some one of his people who had none.

This day's journey brought us to the wells of Keffiyah, four or five in number, where Mahannah, with his household tents, was encamped. These wells, which, from the days of Abraham, seem to have existed in the Desert, supply a brackish water, which necessity alone can render palatable. We gave it to our horses, in order to preserve the sweet water for our own drinking.

We rested here one day. Lady Hester received the visits and, we may say, the homage of the chief shaykhs, who came in from all quarters. To all of these presents were made, generally of articles of dress. Her ladyship took for the sentry of her tent a tall black slave, named Guntar, a fellow of reputed courage and daring, and whose scowling looks and tremendous battle-axe (his only weapon) almost excited terror in those whom he was destined to protect.

The Anizy were at this time at war with the Faydân; a tribe that generally pastured on the borders

of the Euphrates. The Faydân were known to have some strong parties abroad, and it was probable, that, if they received information of our route, they would attack us. Much attention was therefore paid to the order of our march with the view of avoiding a surprise. Soon after daybreak, on the 24th, the tents being struck and the camels loaded, Lady Hester and her guard, with Nasar, took the lead, whilst Mr. B. and myself and the armed servants covered the rear of the caravan. Scouts were sent out ahead of us to reconnoitre; and, although sometimes we lost sight of them for hours, and there were no beaten paths, they were still sure to rejoin us.

To beguile the way, the Bedouin horsemen performed sham fights. Throwing off the keffiyas, which covered their heads, they let their long hair fly in the wind, which gave them a very wild appearance; then, resting their lances, and setting up a war-whoop, they would select an opponent and ride furiously at him. He would avoid the attack, get the upper hand by a short turn, and then become the assailant: and this I believe to be generally the way in which Arabs fight. When they had tired themselves, two bards, who were of the party, recited pieces of poetry; which, though not understood by us, evidently had a great effect on the Bedouins.

Having passed some wells, close by the ruins of a village, called Jarryat Theap, [1] we halted at

[1] I should conjecture Jarryat Theap, were it somewhat more

Menghiazy, a ruined village, at the edge of the Beláz, a mountainous chain, and just where a forest of turpentine trees begins. We found an encampment of Bedouins, whose shaykh, named Mnyf, was introduced to us as a brave chieftain: and here we passed the night.

The following morning we resumed our journey. The Beláz seems to consist of two parallel chains of low mountains, with deep valleys between them, separated here and there by a transverse chain. We had surmounted the first chain, and, through the Menkûra, or ravine, were descending into the valley, when we were gratified with the sight of an entire tribe of Arabs on their march in search of pasture. This is one of the most pleasing spectacles that we met with in the Desert. The line of march might consist of one thousand camels, some of which were winding down the slope of the opposite mountain, and the rest filing in different directions along the valley, loaded with tents, women, and utensils: whilst the whole valley was absolutely covered with the young or unloaded camels, which followed their respective masters.

south, to be the *Centum Putei.* It is proper to observe, that little reliance can be placed on the names of places in this journey. They are spelt as they sounded to my ears when pronounced by the Bedouins, and were written down at the time. But, when it is considered that the Bedouins give entirely different sounds to the letters of the alphabet from what is customary in the towns, it is impossible not to have committed many errors where the words in Arabic were unknown to me.

These Bedouins were called the Sebàh, and were tributaries of Mahannah's. The men were very meagre, and unlike any race of beings I had ever seen; and their dress was as ragged as that of gipsies. They wore their hair long, and in curls. The women rode in a species of saddle, shaped like the scull of a ram with the horns on, which I have described before. To the horns were appended gaudy ornaments in coloured worsted. The faces of the women were tatooed. Most of the mares were without saddles, and were ridden with nothing but a hair rope put on as a halter. They stared in astonishment at our cavalcade, and, when they had learned who Lady Hester was, they necessarily thought it still more wonderful.

Her ladyship chose this moment for resting herself, and a small tent was fixed for her on a rising ground that commanded a view of the whole valley, where she reposed for about an hour. Having quitted the Beláz mountain, we entered an open country, and, at a considerable distance before us, we beheld two conical mounts with flattened tops close to each other, at the foot of which we encamped.

It was Lady Hester's custom, as soon as the bustle of encamping was over, and things were a little quiet, to go to the tent which was set apart for meals, conversation, &c.; where, when we were together, she would summon to her those of the Arabs with whom she wished to converse. Hitherto, Nasar had always obeyed this summons with great alacrity: but to-day,

in answer, he sent back word "that Lady Hester might be the daughter of a vizir, but he, too, was the son of a prince, and was not disposed at that moment to quit his tent: if she wanted him, she, or her interpreter, might come to him." It was in vain to be angry where anger could avail nothing. The Bedouins now began to buz about that Nasar was very moody; that they hoped this boded no mischief; that it would be a sad thing if he should order us back; and a hundred expressions calculated to breed alarm among us. As far as regarded the servants, it had its effect: but that was not Nasar's object. Either as a frolic, or as an experiment to ascertain whether, by false alarms, Lady Hester would be induced to offer him an increased price to secure her safety, his aim was against her; but he failed altogether; for she showed no symptom of fear: and, although she could not make the reply which would have been so natural in a European's mouth, but which in a Mahometan's, by whom respect to females is not held as a duty, has no sense, namely, that his rudeness towards a woman was inexcusable; still she treated him with complete indifference all that evening; and orders were given that all persons should be on the alert against anything that might happen in the night. Nasar, however, remained quiet, but prepared another stratagem for the ensuing encampment, which did not leave us quite so tranquil.

We departed early in the morning, over an undulating country, stony and with scanty herbage. After

three hours, we arrived at Gebel el Abiad, or the White Mountain, but at the south-west extremity, where the chain, from lofty mountains, had dwindled into hills only. As we entered upon them, we found some wells, and a neat burying-ground, with ruins of a building. This place is called Wady el Jar. Three hours more brought us to the edge of the hills on the other side, where it was resolved to encamp for the night. Fearing the cottage destined for Lady Hester at Palmyra had not been emptied of its tenants, or would not be ready for her, I resolved to ride on to that place immediately, accompanied by Hassan, my former guide, and another Bedouin, an officer of Mahannah's, whose duty it would be to put everything in order: but, as it was now four o'clock in the afternoon, and we had a plain of five leagues to pass, having already come seven, no time was to be lost; and, without baiting our horses, we started. I have, in my former journey, described this plain, called the Mezah, as destitute of vegetation, barren, and frightful. Upon it there was a solitary tree only, about five miles from the spot where we quitted our party: this, and the stems of a few bulbous plants, were the only objects on it.

I was mounted on the white horse which the pasha of Acre had given to Lady Hester, and which she subsequently presented to me. He was a noble animal, and had been much admired by the Bedouins. There was now an occasion of trying him, and of comparing

his strength with that of the mare on which the Bedouin was mounted: which poor animal seemed entirely skin and bone, with her hoofs grown to an enormous length, so that the point of them turned up.

We had not passed half the plain when night came on, and my companions began to quicken their pace. I was obliged to follow. By degrees they got into a gallop and pressed onward. I kept up with them for some time, until I found that my horse grew sluggish. The night was so dark that sometimes I thought I had lost sight of them, and I feared they would outride me, and leave me to find my way on a plain where there was a certainty of going astray. I hallooed to them, but they would not pull up, and I found that I had no resource but in the use of my stirrups, whose sharp corners I drove repeatedly into my horse's sides: yet I am certain, had I been alone, no force of blows could have compelled him to go on: it was only the noise of the horses before him, or the sight of them, which induced him to proceed. In the Valley of the Tombs they pulled up, and there told me they could not pay attention to my calls: for our safety depended on our swiftness over those dreary wilds, where we might have been stopped and plundered. We arrived at last at the ruins, and, traversing them to the Temple, went strait to the house where I had lodged before.

Immediately the shaykh was sent for, and I informed him of Lady Hester's approach. On the fol-

lowing morning, the cottages, being three in number, at the north-west angle of the Temple, built against the seven pillars still standing, were cleared out, swept, and left with their bare walls. They were very rudely constructed of unshapen stones, cemented by mud: the floors were of yellow clay, and the walls within of the same. A flight of steps went up to the first story, where was an airy room that looked over the ruins, and this I set apart for Lady Hester's chamber. I sat and smoked my pipe throughout the morning, in company with the shaykh, explaining to him what things we should stand in need of; but I observed that there was a vast bustle through the village of men, women, and girls, running in all directions; and it was not until afterwards that I learned what all this meant.

When I had left Lady Hester, in whom Nasar's conduct on the preceding evening had caused some diminution in the confidence which had previously been reposed in him, the conversation after dinner naturally turned upon what should be done in case he was guilty of any treachery. In the midst of the conference, Pierre came in to say that some of the Bedouin mares had been stolen, and that it was supposed there were some of the Faydân Arabs lurking about the encampment. Soon after, other servants came running to say that enemies had been seen; and that all the Bedouins, whose mares were yet safe, were mounting, and going to reconnoitre; and, in fact,

much noise of horses and much bustle were heard.

It is necessary to observe that, when encamped, each Bedouin usually ties the halter of his mare to her hind-leg, and then turns her loose to graze, excepting when an enemy is supposed to be near. To have a mare stray in the night was therefore no extraordinary thing; and at first it was conjectured that this was another of Nasar's tricks to breed alarm. But when it was evident that he and his people had armed and mounted, and had ridden off, Mr. B. and Lady Hester knew not what to think of it. They immediately gave orders that every person should take his pistols and musket, with which all were provided; and they stationed them at different points; she herself, as I was afterwards assured by Mr. B., remaining as calm as if in a ball-room. Some readers will say, "And what was there to frighten her?" But let them rest assured that the stoutest heart might tremble under the conjoined circumstances of being in a Desert, among freebooters, treble in number to one's own people, and charged with luggage most tempting in their eyes. In about twenty minutes the horsemen returned, and Nasar among them. They pretended that there had been a small party of the enemy, which had fled.

It was afterwards conjectured that Nasar had only withdrawn a few hundred yards from the encampment, and there waited to discover what effect the alarm

would have on Lady Hester, in order to act as he might think expedient; but, finding that he should have some trouble to do mischief, he probably judged it better to leave it alone.

About twelve o'clock, I rode by myself out of Palmyra to meet Lady Hester. I traversed the Valley of the Tombs, and, at the extremity, I ascended to the summit of a small mountain on the south side of the valley, overlooking the plain, some miles in length, through which runs the aqueduct of Abu el Fewàrez. The day was hot and fine. I was surprised, on casting my eyes in the direction in which Lady Hester was to come, to see an appearance of a great cloud of dust. It was at first too far for me to distinguish objects, but, after waiting about an hour, I could plainly observe horsemen riding to and fro, and the smoke of firearms, of which sometimes I could hear the report. I knew not what to imagine; but my mind misgave me, and I thought that Lady Hester and her party were attacked by the enemy. As they approached nearer, I could distinguish more plainly the same skirmishing, but I thought I could descry pretty clearly that they advanced steadily, and that no dead or wounded were left by the way. I descended into the plain to meet them, and my apprehensions did not subside until I joined them; I then understood the reason of the skirmishing and of all the bustle that had taken place at Palmyra in the morning.

The inhabitants had resolved on welcoming Lady Hester in the best manner they could, and had gone out in a body to meet her. There might be altogether fifty men on foot, who, naked down to the waist, without shoes or stockings, and covered with a sort of antique petticoat, ran by the side of as many horsemen, galloping in all directions, with rude kettle-drums beating and colours flying. The tanned skins of the men on foot formed a curious contrast with the cowry shells, or blackamoor's teeth, studded on the two belts which crossed their shoulders, and to which were suspended their powder-flasks and cartouch-boxes. These Palmyrenes carry matchlocks, slung across their backs, and are very skilful in the use of them. They are huntsmen by profession, and they are often engaged in petty warfare with the Bedouins, for the protection of their caravans.

For the amusement of Lady Hester and Mr. B., they displayed before them a mock attack and defence of a caravan. Each party, anxious to distinguish itself in the eyes of the English lady, fought with a pretended fury that once or twice might almost have been thought real. The men on foot exhibited on the person of a horseman the mode of stripping for plunder, and no valet de chambre could undress his master more expeditiously.

On entering the Valley of the Tombs, Lady Hester's attention was absorbed in viewing the wonders around her, and the combatants desisted. But

another sight, prepared by the Palmyrenes, here awaited her. In order to increase the effect which ruins cause on those who enter them for the first time, the guides led us up through the long colonnade, which extends four thousand feet in length from north-west to south-east, in a line with the gate of the temple. This colonnade is terminated by a triumphal arch. The shaft of each pillar, to the right and left, at about the height of six feet from the ground, has a projecting pedestal, called in architecture a console, under several of which is a Greek or Palmyrene inscription; and upon each there once stood a statue, of which at present no vestige remains excepting the marks of the cramp-iron for the feet. What was our surprise to see, as we rode up the avenue, and just as the triumphal arch came in sight, that several beautiful girls (selected, as we afterwards learned, from the age of twelve to sixteen) had been placed on these very pedestals, in the most graceful postures, and with garlands in their hands; their elegant shapes being but slightly concealed by a single loose robe, girded at the waist with a zone, and a white crape veil covering their heads. On each side of the arch other girls, no less lovely, stood by threes, whilst a row of six was ranged across the gate of the arch, with thyrsi in their hands. Whilst Lady Hester advanced, these living statues remained immoveable on their pedestals; but when she had passed they leaped on the ground, and joined in a dance by her side. On

reaching the triumphal arch, the whole in groups, together with men and girls intermixed, danced around her. Here some bearded elders chanted verses in her praise, and all the spectators joined in chorus. The sight was truly interesting, and I have seldom seen one that moved my feelings more. Lady Hester herself seemed to partake of the emotions to which her presence in this remote spot had given rise. Nor was the wonder of the Palmyrenes less than our own. They beheld with amazement a woman, who had ventured thousands of miles from her own country, and had now crossed a waste where hunger and thirst were only a part of the evils to be dreaded. The procession advanced, after a pause, to the gate of the Temple, being by this time increased by the addition of every man, woman, and child, in the village. At length she reached the cottage which had been prepared for her.

The next day her ladyship gave to repose, but Mr. B. devoted it to walking over the ruins. He had brought with him Wood and Dawkins's plates. Fifty years had made little difference in Palmyra, excepting that a column or two, then standing, were now fallen down. The keystone of the triumphal arch likewise was loose, and seemed as if it would fall. In looking about among the fragments which lie towards the north-west extremity of the colonnade, I found a portion of a statue, in alto relievo, represented as sitting in a chair. With the exception of

this, of the heads on a ceiling in the sanctuary and on some of the sepulchres, and of a small bas-relief of a naked woman reclining on a sofa, which is on one of the walls of an old mosque about five hundred feet from the Temple, and which is not mentioned by Wood and Dawkins, I know of no other figures that have been discovered in or about Palmyra.

March the 29th, Lady Hester mounted her horse, and went to see the ruins. She knew the report that was current of her being in search after treasures, and took an ingenious mode of curing the shaykh of the village of such a belief. She told him she would have him go with her; and she, being on horseback, led him, who was on foot, such a round, that the poor man, little curious about places in which he had lived all his life, begged her at last to excuse him, as he could walk no farther.

To examine the interior of the sanctuaries which compose the centre building of the Temple, and where are two beautiful ceilings of the zodiac, and several bas-reliefs, torches were made; and by the help of these we were enabled to see them with a stronger light than I suppose any other travellers had done; for there is no window whatever to let in the day, and only a low hole to crawl in by.

On the 30th of March, as there was to be a wedding on the morrow, and it is customary for a Mahometan bride to go to the bath the day before her marriage, the hot spring of Ephca was used for that purpose.

Lady Hester went to see the washing: but, of course, gentlemen could not be present. More than a dozen women, together with the bride, stripped and entered the grotto, and then came swimming and floundering out in a string. It cost them but little trouble to strip; for they wore only one covering, which was a shift of coquelicot coloured silk, with white diamond spots like India handkerchiefs; for this, as being next the skin, may as well be called a shift as a robe. It is confined by a girdle, fastened by large silver clasps. It was said, in the former journey, that women generally wore rings through the cartilage of the nose: but we now discovered that it was an ornament affected by married women only.

How long we should have remained at Palmyra I cannot tell, had not an unforeseen event somewhat hurried our departure. Four Bedouins of the tribe of the Faydân had come, for some sinister purpose, into the environs of Palmyra, where they lay concealed. The want of water obliged them to leave their hiding-place to drink at the spring. It happened that four of our Bedouins had strayed that way upon the look-out, and, spying the men, pursued and took them. In what way four of one tribe were better than four of another I did not learn. It was discovered that they were Faydân,[1] and Nasar ordered them into confinement. In the night two of them eluded the vigilance of their guard, and escaped.

[1] The Faydân were said to have 2,000 tents.

When Nasar heard of it, he raved like a madman, and could with difficulty be prevented from taking the life of the shaykh of Palmyra who had suffered them to escape. Nasar then told Lady Hester what had happened. He said that these men, no doubt, would hasten back to their tribe, and give information of her presence in Palmyra, and of the rich booty that was to be made. He therefore begged of her to consent to return to Hamah immediately, signifying that if a party stronger than their own should, by forced marches, overtake us, we must inevitably fall into their hands. Lady Hester, in consequence of this representation, fixed on the following day: but I shrewdly suspected the whole to be a trick invented by Nasar for the purpose of getting her away. She saw deeper into it, perhaps, than I could do, but did not tell her thoughts: perhaps Nasar did not think the deposit in Muly Ismäel's hands quite safe, and felt uneasy until he had it in his own possession.

Lady Hester was curious to see the Faydân whilst they were yet in custody. They said to her, "Be not alarmed lest our people should come against you. Your name has already reached the ears of the Emir of the Faydân; and, wherever his subjects meet you, you will be respected. It is our enemies, the Anizys, we seek; but you we set upon our heads"—(an expression much used among the Arabs to denote an absolute devotion to the service of another). We did not, however, think it proper to risk the safety of

Nasar and his people, even though our own was not in danger, and therefore continued in the resolution of departing.

Lady Hester's name was cut out in a conspicuous place as a memorial of her visit to future travellers. At night there was much merriment among the servants. They had selected an open space in the ruins of the Temple, where, seated round a blazing fire, they amused themselves with dancing to the kettle-drum, smoking, and telling stories—and, having as much coffee as they could drink, they remained until the night was far advanced. All the men in the village assembled with them; but the women stood aloof, never daring to mix promiscuously with the other sex.

In order to obtain antiquities in coins and intaglios, I gave out that every engraved stone or coin that was brought to me, of whatever description it might be, should be paid at the rate of 10 paras, about 2d.; and in this way I spent several piasters, but without any success.

CHAPTER VII.

Departure from Palmyra— Suspicions of Nasar—Encampment in a beautiful valley—Tribe of the Sebáh and their Shaykh Mnyf—Assembly of Bedouins at Lady Hester Stanhope's tent—The women—Traits of Bedouin character—Tribe of the Beni Omar—Affray between the Bedouins—Their war-cry—Aqueducts—Salamýah—Clotted cream and sour milk—Meat of the Desert— Castle of Shumamýs—Medical assistance required by Bedouins—Entry of Lady Hester into Hamah—Sum paid to Nasar for escort—Salubrity of the air of the Desert — State of Lady Hester's health — Professional aid of the Author in requisition — Yahyah Bey — Rigid abstinence of a Syrian Christian — The bastinado — Pilgrimage to the tomb of a shaykh—Treatment of horses in spring—Precautions against plague — Custom of supporting great personages under the arm—Schoolmasters — Doctors and their patients.

We left Palmyra on the 4th of April early in the morning, and the danger of an attack from the Faydân had an excellent effect on the servants, camel-drivers, and helpers of all sorts, who, on most occasions, could not be kept together, but who now were as orderly and obedient as soldiers: for fear made them so. Our course was in the same track by which

we had come. As my horse walked a little faster than the common pace, I diverged somewhat from the road, to the right, in order to ascend a small conical mount, which, at two hours' distance from Palmyra, terminates the chain of hills enclosing the plain in which is the aqueduct of Abu Fewárez. I was attracted by something like fragments of a building on its top, and was rewarded for my trouble by finding a fallen pillar of the Corinthian order, and a portion of a statue in alto relievo which had stood upon it. Some future traveller, having more time to examine this piece of sculpture, may be able to discover what it was: but I do not think it had hitherto been noticed by any one. It appeared to me to represent an Apollo. We traversed the Mezzah or sandy plain, and, in five hours from the fallen pillar, reached the White Mountain; where we encamped in a bottom, in order that our lights might not be seen. At each extremity of the tents a vidette of Bedouins was placed, about one hundred paces off; whilst among the tents we ourselves and the servants patrolled armed. Much alarm prevailed. It was whispered among the servants that a plan had been laid by Nasar and his men to make us all prisoners, and exact an immense ransom from us; and others said the Palmyrenes would come upon us in the night: nothing however happened.

April the 5th, we resumed our march; and, by the anxiety Nasar showed to be gone betimes in the morn-

ing, as well as his unwillingness that Lady Hester should stop anywhere in the day for an hour, which was her custom, it was evident that he was not without apprehension. We were three hours and ten minutes in crossing the White Mountain, which here consists only of sand-hills, when we arrived at Wady el Jar. From Wady el Jar we saw the Beláz before us, where a sink in the ridge of the chain formed a landmark. We arrived, in about six hours, at a valley, so beautiful that we all with one accord burst into exclamations of admiration of it; and, as there was a low part in it where our tents were not likely to be seen, it was resolved to encamp here for the night.

In the course of a few days, vegetation had made great progress, and we found the soil in some places covered with fine grass, in others, as where we were now, thickly sprinkled with flowers, so as to resemble a parterre; the more remarkable in our eyes, because the flowers we saw are in England reared only with pains and borrowed heat.

The next morning, April 6th, Nasar gave us no respite, but obliged us with the rising sun to strike our tents, and hasten on our way. There was indeed no doubt left on our minds that he feared an enemy in the rear. This day's march, however, carried us out of danger. In one hour after starting we came to a well, called Ma el kushka, which is at the foot of the Beláz. We ascended the mountain, reached the Fasekh el Menkûra, or valley between the two chains; again

ascended the other side; and, came to Menghiazy, where we quitted the mountain for the plain, and where we seemed to have left such a barrier between us and our pursuers as afforded us security from any very sudden attack. But our greatest protection was in a large encampment of the tribe of the Sebâh Bedouins, which, it will be recollected, we met with on our way to Palmyra in the valley of the Menkûra.

At Menghiazy are the ruins of a Turkman village: and as, wherever I saw fragments of rude walls or the vestiges of houses, the Bedouins generally told me that there had once been a Turkman village, I concluded from it that these plains were frequented and inhabited by Turkman shepherds, as the Accâr, that vast plain near Tripoli, and many other plains, are still. There are the remains of a caravansery at a little distance from the ruins.

The Sebâh, close to whom we were encamped, were a portion only of that large tribe. They were commanded by Shaykh Mnyf, whose tent was a league or two off: for they occupy in their encampments a vast extent of ground, for the sake of pasture for their camels. But, as the next day was to be a halt, Mnyf seized the opportunity of being presented to Lady Hester, and with him, Mfuthy, a ragged shaykh, whom I had known on my first journey. In the afternoon, before sunset, Lady Hester received all the Bedouin women. The assembly was very numerous. The men, sitting cross-legged on the grass, formed a

semicircle at the door of her tent, where she had a seat placed for herself. Shaykh Mnyf was invested with a new abah and turban: Shaykh Mfuthy had likewise a present. But the most curious part was to see the women, who at once excited and expressed curiosity. They were very brown, and some of them, from the effects of fatigue and a hot sun, were, when cursorily looked at, truly hideous; but, in all of them, the outline of beauty was perceptible, either in their frame, or in their face. Wherever, likewise, a girl or young woman was to be seen, she would very often prove to be of great beauty; and black and swimming eyes were never-failing features. Lady Hester, remarkable herself for the fairness of her complexion, served as a foil to them, and they to her. She distributed among them a few beads, some handkerchiefs, and such trifles as would serve as a memorial of her visit.

During the interval that had elapsed between our going and returning, several tribes had come up from different directions, and had encamped in the road by which we were to return. All were attracted by curiosity, and in some was added the desire of sharing in the presents which were given away with a liberal hand. It was on one of these occasions that a Bedouin, rendered somewhat enthusiastic by the scene before him, throwing off his keffiyah, cried, "Give me a hat, and I will go to England."

These Bedouin women were tatooed on the under lip, on the arms and hands, and on the feet. The fashion

for their head-dress was to press the hair flat on the head, and to braid the ringlets at the side; a style that may be seen in many ancient statues. Some of the youths also had plaited their tresses. The first question which the Bedouins always asked was, whether we had a sultan, how old he was, how many children he had, &c. When they learned that his queen[1] had borne him fifteen, and that they formed one of the finest families in Europe in looks and person, the Bedouins would cry out, "Mashallah!" which is their exclamation of surprise at anything astonishing and pleasing.

April 8th, we proceeded on our route towards Hamah. From Menghiazy, we passed the ruined caravansery, of which I have already spoken. We continued over a tolerably level country for four hours more, when we came to Kerejat Atheab, where there are ruins of a Turkman village and some wells a little apart from each other. The country, as we advanced, became more verdant, because the soil was less stony. From Kerejat Atheab, we proceeded to Rekhym el Khanzýr, where we encamped for the night. Here we found the tents of the Beni Omar, under their chieftain, Ali Bussal, of whom mention has been made in my first journey.

The next morning, April the 9th, we struck our tents, and were waiting, as was our custom, each with his horse's bridle in his hand, ready to mount as soon

[1] Charlotte, wife of George III.

as Lady Hester should come out of her tent, which was always the last standing: Nasar was sitting on a knoll, conversing with a shaykh of the Beni Omar, and other Bedouins were standing around. I thought their discussions, whatever they might be, were rather warm; but I paid no attention to them, as their emphatic manner of speaking had more than once deceived me; but presently two Bedouins drew their sabres, down in the valley before us, and began fighting. In an instant, up rose Nasar and the Bedouins, and leaped on their mares: they rode towards the combatants, who desisted, and a crowd collected round Nasar. At this time Lady Hester came out, and Mr. B. and I told her what had happened. Immediately she mounted her horse, as we did ours, and, with great presence of mind, said, "Whatever happens, remain you still until attacked: if the quarrel is their own, we have no right to interfere." The crowd now opened: Nasar and his party came towards us; the Beni Omar retreated to their side. The shaykhs, with Nasar, formed a circle around him, with their horses' heads pointing inwards, and, striking their spears on the ground, sang, as they sat, a kind of chorus, of which I could make out something to this effect, "Nasar, Nasar, we fight for Nasar." The tone of their voices and quickness of utterance by degrees were augmented, until, by a repetition of this, their war-cry, they seemed to have worked themselves into a fury.

At this time the man, with whom Nasar had been

speaking so vehemently before the beginning of the affray, came riding at a gallop, with the spear in its rest, his head uncovered, and his hair flying in the wind, towards Nasar and his party. Seeing this, Shaykh Hamûd, an old man, mounted on a fine gray mare, rode out to meet him, but with his spear on his shoulder. He stopped him in his career, argued with him some time, and at last persuaded him to retire. It may be conceived what our anxiety must have been during these proceedings: for it is impossible to say what would have become of us, had these two parties come to blows. By degrees, both sides seemed to grow pacified, and at last we rode off, leaving the Beni Omar in possession of the field, muttering threats and vowing revenge. We were afterwards told that the dispute began about a thorough-bred colt, which Nasar unfairly withheld from the true owner.

We passed to-day through plains more like meadows than a desert, where the grass was nearly high enough to make hay. In an hour and a half, we came to Khurbah, a Turkman village, with a tel or conical mound close to it. We passed three other tels before we reached the ruined city of Salamyah. We encamped outside the walls, near some tents of the Hadidyns.

Before arriving at Salamyah, near the last tel, are found circular openings in the ground, like the mouths of wells. Looking into them, an aqueduct of excellent masonry in hewn stones is seen to run under ground, having these vent-holes at equal distances. We lost

sight of it for some time, and it then re-appeared within a short distance of Salamyah. From the vent-holes wild pigeons flew out, and, without this evidence that there was water beneath, we could observe it in places trickling along in a small stream.

Pliny and Wood agree in thinking that from Emesa to Palmyra the name of desert was always applicable, and that, from the days of Abraham up to our times, the face of it has not changed. We would not oppose our judgment to theirs, and yet a contrary opinion might surely be entertained, when ruins are found at every step, and an aqueduct that indicates the height of civilization.

April 9th, we halted at Salamyah, and took this opportunity of viewing the ruins of the city; for such it appears to have been, and of Saracen origin. Salamyah is described by Abulfeda as an agreeable place, with aqueducts conveying water to it, and with many gardens around it. It was built by Abdallah ben Salah, a descendant, in the fifth generation, from Abd el Motalleb. In the time of El Azyzy, it was on the skirts of the desert;[1] now it is fairly in it. Around it, there was a well-built wall. Over the gate by which we entered, to the south, was a long inscription in Arabic, which we did not copy for want of time. Within we found the remains of two or three mosques, with their cupolas yet upon them, and of a public bath; also the walls of houses, and some wells, which

[1] Abulfeda, p. 105.

contained water, and from one of which we drew our supply. It did not appear to me that this place had been inhabited during the last forty or fifty years.

At Menghiazy, at Rekhym el Khanzýr, and here, the Bedouins emulated each other in the reception they gave Lady Hester. At her request, the finest mares were brought for her to look at. Several Arabs offered them as presents to her; but made it understood that they valued them at a price so enormous, that, to make a present in return as an adequate recompense, would have been paying too dear. Her ladyship, therefore, declined accepting them. Bedouins, on such occasions, are extremely mercenary, and strangely overrate their property.

Lady Hester having expressed a desire to ride on a dromedary, one of their best, which they call hejýn, and which are used for expeditious journeys, was selected, and dressed up with an ornamental saddle and housings. She rode for a short distance, and probably found the motion very unpleasant, which it must necessarily be at first to every one.

As soon as we had come to the west of the Beláz, we were supplied very constantly with clotted cream (kymàk) and sour milk, (leben), than which the dairy can produce nothing better; and it will raise the latter cooling preparation in the estimation of some, to know that it has been used, time immemorial, in these countries, and is spoken of in Xenophon as 'οξύγαλα. The finest mutton was never wanting at our table;

for, although the true Bedouin scorns to pasture any animal but camels, still there are certain bastard tribes, such as the Mowâly, and a few more that we saw, which are mere graziers, and paid tribute to Emir Mahannah for the protection he afforded them.

As the Castle of Shumamys, built on a mountain, was distant only about a league from the encampment, I was inclined to ride over to examine it; but the direction of our march lying close to the foot of it, I executed my project on the following morning. Before the camels were loaded, Hassan and I rode forward, and, arriving in an hour, by a very steep ascent reached the summit of the mountain. At the foot of the castle walls the rock is cut into a glacis with a considerable slope, within which is a deep ditch hewn out of the solid stone. Facing the gate of the castle, a buttress or pier still left in the centre of the ditch served for the support of the drawbridge, now entirely fallen. Leaving Hassan to take care of the horses, I descended into the ditch, and climbed up on the opposite side, which was not so difficult to do as I had found it at Palmyra. The two castles resembled each other exactly, and of course may be supposed to be of the same date, either of Saracen or Frank construction.

We descended into the plain, and joined the party who had just cleared the foot of the mountains, which is one extremity of the chain called Gebel el Aâleh. This chain, taking a semicircular

direction, finishes at Gebel Abd ed dyn two leagues N. by E. of Hamah, and encloses one of the richest plains it is possible to see. At Tel el Byrûth, we encamped for the night, and found there the Emir Mahannah el Fadel, who received Lady Hester with every testimony of respect and joy for her safe return, which was now in a manner effected, as we were only three or four leagues from Hamah.

We halted the next day. An accident happened at this place, which nearly cost the loss of an eye to one of the bards who had accompanied us hitherto. Farez, second son of Mahannah, was throwing, as he would throw a javelin, the stalk of an astragalus, (with which flower the place was thickly set, and the stalks of which are firm and reedy at this season) when he struck one of the bards on the lid and brow of the eye. The man was in great pain, and the swelling was instantaneous and considerable: but a leech which I applied set all to rights; yet the bard was by no means pleased with Farez's exploit. The astragalus and squill plants were so abundant, that their long sword-like leaves obstructed the paths in every direction. Upon their leaves I found a beautiful fly, much like the lytta.

In the afternoon Lady Hester wished to try Shaykh Hamud's white mare, and she mounted it. In putting her into a gallop, the mare, aware of some difference in the rider's management of her, or from some other cause, ran away with her ladyship, who, however,

contrived at last to pull her up, without any mischief, to the admiration of the Bedouins who were looking on.

It must not be supposed that, during the whole of this journey, the Arabs had suffered me to remain quiet in my professional capacity. Knowing the frequent applications I should have, previous to quitting Hamah, I had put up a large stock of pills and powders, as of easiest administration; and I could have used the contents of an apothecary's shop had I been so disposed. But a serious call was made upon me whilst in camp, by a horseman who came over from the tents of Shaykh Casem, to entreat me to make but a short journey thither, to save the son of their chief, who had been transfixed by a spear, in a skirmish with the Faydân; and Lady Hester thought it better that I should go.

His tents were due north of Tel el Byrûth. I took with me my own tent, which was a small octagonal marquee, made without a central pole, and very commodious; and, accompanied by the Bedouin, who had come to fetch me, I set off the following day, under the idea of having but a short distance to ride. But my guide had deceived me, with the intention of more easily persuading me to go; for we passed the chain of Mount Aâleh at two hours off, and still rode on for two or three hours more, until we reached, at sunset, Casem's tents. The parents of the wounded youth were so impatient to take me to him, that I

was scarcely permitted first to take my coffee and pipe, which on other occasions they oblige you to do before they will suffer you to attend to business.

Casem's son was about sixteen years old, with a fine air, which would have been fierce, had it not been softened down by his sufferings from his wound. A spear had entered his back under the blade-bone, and had deeply penetrated into the lungs. Instead of being a fresh wound, it proved to be now of some time standing. I did what I judged better for him than the dressings he was using; gave him some medicines to be taken as occasion might require, and passed three days with him to see what effect they would have. The first day there was a certainty of a speedy and miraculous cure; the second day his friends were less sanguine; and on the third, they observed that my remedies had not effected any very extraordinary change for the better. This was the tone of mind in which it was proper to leave them. They were thankful for the pains I had taken, and a Bedouin escorted me to Hamah, where Lady Hester and Mr. B. already were since the 13th. Crowds of people had gone out to welcome them on their return, considering her as a true heroine, who could perform in triumph what not a pasha in all Turkey durst venture to do with all his troops at his heels. It was given out at Hamah afterwards that two hundred horsemen, on the report of the two fugitives from Palmyra, had come in pursuit of us to the Beláz, but were a day too late to overtake

us: that, however, they would have followed us farther, but were stopped by a party of the Sebáh, who had a skirmish with them, in which the Faydân were so much worsted as to find it necessary to retire.[1]

On her arrival at Hamah, Lady Hester rode strait to Muly Ismael's house, where a great dinner was prepared. The remainder of the money due to Nasar was paid, and the dangers and adventures of the journey talked over. There has crept into a publication (called Journal of a Tour in the Levant) an assertion that it cost Lady Hester 30,000 piasters to get to Palmyra. I think it necessary to state that this assertion is entirely erroneous, as may be proved from documents now in my hands, which must be considered as decisive authority on that head.[2]

[1] Our sufferings on the journey were, after all, not very severe. Oxley, in his Researches in the interior of Australasia, underwent more; for, as he relates, about June the 1st, he found no water for thirty-six hours either for his people or horses, with a want of herbage likewise; but then he had no great heat to contend with.

[2] See pp. 215 to 222 of Mr. Salt's Travels, for a comparison of the sum paid by Lady Hester to go to Palmyra, with that paid by Mr. Salt at Arhecko, to get to Gondar, where, after all, he never arrived. Chateaubriand pretended that it cost him 5,000 piasters to go to the Dead Sea.

In another book of Travels, published about 1829, I find the following passage; the author is speaking of Mahannah and his son:—" After much prevarication, during which they endea-

No better proof can be adduced of the salubrity of the air of the Desert, than the excellent condition in which the horses were on our return, and the compliments paid on the improved good looks of all the party. I believe I have neglected to mention that, previous to quitting Damascus, and from the moment that the journey to Palmyra was talked about, Mr. B. and myself had let our beards grow, having been informed that much respect was universally paid to this supposed emblem of wisdom and manhood by the Bedouins, which we found to be the case.

During the journey, an Arab brought me a jerboa alive. Wishing to preserve it, and having no box or cage fit for such a purpose, I put it into a boot sewed up at the top, and carried it slung to my horse's side for one day, but on the second I found that it had eaten a hole through the leather, and escaped.

I omitted to mention, in my first journey to Palmyra, that, when with the Bedouins, I drank for three mornings camels' milk, to see if its reputed qualities were exaggerated or not. On me it had no sensible effect; yet I could not be deceived in the trial I made, for, fasting from my pillow, I drank a pint the first

voured to make us pay for the camels extra, they at length consented to our terms, as they said, for the love of the Malaka or queen, for such they were pleased to call Lady Hester, who gave £500 for this trip. Had we paid them as much money, no doubt, they would have called us two kings; for, like the Nubians, flûs, (money) is their idol."

morning, a pint and a half the second, and half a pint the third. On this journey I was determined to try its effects on the servants, and here its operation was instantaneous and remarkable, causing a diarrhœa, which lasted the whole day.

It will hardly be believed, by those who may peruse this narrative, that Lady Hester, at this period, by no means enjoyed a good state of health; yet such was really the case, and her spirit, rather than her physical powers, helped her to surmount so much fatigue and to endure so many privations. Her pursuit was indeed health, but the phantom fled before her. Always a valetudinarian, she always flattered herself that some untried spot remained where she might find what she sought. Happy consolation of the sick, whom Hope never gives up to Despair!

Lady Hester brought with her to Hamah two Bedouins, with an intention of carrying them to England as a curiosity: but a city life, the want of the open country, loss of appetite and health, were things so little congenial to their feelings, that they could not be induced to stop.

I had taken up my abode this time in a small unfurnished house, which I hired of a Turk. My return to Hamah was again the signal for being besieged by the sick. I shall mention one or two of my patients, whose cases may have something curious for the general reader. Yahyah Bey, whose deposition and removal to Hamah I have already spoken of,

had contrived to make his peace there by the sacrifice of large sums of money, and was now come back to Hamah to live as a private person. One of his concubines was ill, and he asked me to see her. She had had an ague for eight months, with little loss of strength, sleep, or appetite. I was introduced to an inner room, and she was sent for to come to me. She entered, covered with the yzzár,[1] a large white veil reaching to the ground, which she kept on during the whole time I was with her. Yahyah Bey watched her actions like an Argus, and, the moment I had done questioning her, sent her out of the room.

Another patient, whom I saw April 20th, was an old man of the sect of the Syrians, very ill of a fever. It was then Lent, and the rules of his religion, with respect to fasting, were, it would appear, more rigid than those of either the Greek or Catholic church; for he could not, according to them, eat anything but bread, oil, and herbs. I desired him to relax somewhat from this severe abstinence, if he wished to save his life. He would on no account consent to do so; and, as his age and malady required nourishment of a different kind, he died a martyr to his scruples.

[1] The yzzár is a covering of white calico or cambric muslin, precisely of the form of a sheet when spread out, which is so put on as to envelop the whole body, and is worn by every female of any respectability throughout Syria. It is called likewise setarah and melaêah.

Bilious remittent fevers were at this time prevalent in Hamah, and they seemed, in some instances, to be contagious. I was called in to the khodja of Nasýf pasha. The term khodja means an old and confidential servant of the house, who teaches the children their letters: out of a family, it implies a schoolmaster, or is an appellation given to an old respectable merchant or shopkeeper: whence I think is derived our word Codger. The pasha showed great anxiety about him. The mode of treatment they had adopted for him was simple and sensible, and he would have recovered without my interference.

My most troublesome patient was the lady of Selim Koblán, of whom mention has been made above. She had never borne any children, and was exceedingly anxious to be able to hold up her head among her acquaintance: for it is a source of much sorrow and shame both to man and wife in the East, but more especially to the woman, when the union is not productive of offspring.

On the 22d, whilst sitting with Muly Ismael in the saloon where he was accustomed to receive his visitors and despatch the business of the day, one of his soldiers, accused of frequenting women of the town, was brought before him, and, the case being heard, the Muly, in a summary way, ordered him to be bastinadoed. He was lifted from the ground by two or three of his comrades in the middle of the room where we were,

held up horizontally, and three or four others with switches kept striking the soles of his feet as fast as they could, until the Muly told them to stop.[1] The man cried out very much, but seemed to obtain no commiseration. As soon as he was let down, Mahannah, the emir, who was there, rose from his seat, kissed Muly Ismäel's hand, and thanked him for this public example made for repressing libertinism. Now the Muly, at this time, was notorious for his sensual indulgences. One of his people told me that he was rubbed in the bath, where he entered every day, by his women, whilst others of them danced before him in the state of nature. But this is the story that is told of every Turk who is known to be a sensualist: and generally signifies no more than what the narrator would do if he were in the same place.[2] Mahannah,

[1] Generally the legs of the culprit are passed through two nooses on a bar, which bar is held up at the two ends, the sufferer being on his back. This bar is called falak. Mr. B. on one occasion, being justly offended at the neglect of his groom, sent him to the governor, with a request that he might be punished: but the governor refused to do it, unless paid for it.

[2] In confirmation of this position, let us see what an English gentleman says, who, in relating what he saw in Egypt, was evidently not aware that Turkish women of any degree above paupers never bathe in *cold* water, and always use the hot baths of their own houses, if they have them, or of the city in which they reside. "At the end of the garden farthest from the palace, the pasha is amusing himself in erecting, round a large artificial sheet of water, an enclosed colonnade, with several apartments connected with it. In the centre of the

although he confined himself to wives only, yet was pleased with a variety of them. In the night there was a thunder-storm.

It was a matter of wonder to me to observe how generally every kind of vegetable was eaten raw by the people of Syria. Cucumbers and carrots they pare and eat as we do apples: and, besides lettuce and cress, they would devour raw peas and beans almost as swine do. About this time died M. Guys, French consul at Tripoli. He left behind him a most valuable collection of Greek and Roman coins, which his residence in the Levant, for many years, had enabled him to collect.

On the summit of a mountain to the north of Hamah, distant about one league and a half, is the tomb of Shaykh Abd ed Dyn, a man held in veneration among the Moslems: and, on the 24th of April,

colonnade, is a chamber with a large balcony for the use of the great man himself, from which he will enjoy the singular, and in Turkey alone not indelicate pleasure, of seeing his ladies bathe, and frequently, when he orders it, splash each other with water, and play various other pranks for his amusement." Diary of a Tour through South India, Egypt, and Palestine, by a Field Officer of Cavalry, p. 238. Hatchard, 1823. Now, without having seen the sheet of water in question, I will venture to say, that, so long as there continues to be water in the basin, not a woman will ever bathe in it. The balcony is a place intended to sit and smoke in, and the water to contribute to the coolness always so eagerly sought after in such climates.

there is annually a pilgrimage to his shrine. Observing that numbers of people flocked upon the road, I took my ride that way in the afternoon. No one would have said that the Turkish women were deprived of liberty, had he seen them on a holyday like this. From Hamah to the very top of the mountain, parties of women and girls were going and coming, and their volubility of tongue, and remarks to the men passing and repassing them, were the less repressed, because the faces of those uttering them could not be seen.

Spring had now clothed the country in all its verdure, and the occupations of the year might be said to be commencing. One of the most important, and which forms as great an epoch in the annals of a gentleman in the East, as the shooting season does among our gentry in England, is the sending their steeds to grass. Each man deprives himself one month out of the year of his game at giryd, and of his exercise on horseback, for the purpose of cleansing his animals: nor does he disdain to use means not much unlike these for purifying his own system. As soon as spring sets in, he loses blood from the arm by the lancet, or by cupping, from the leg or between the shoulders; with a view to prevent inflammatory diseases created by the effervescence of the blood in the first heats of the year. Such is the mode of reasoning prevalent among them, and, on a particular day, which is decided by the wane of the moon,

twenty persons might be seen, on the benches at the doors of each barber's shop, in different stages of phlebotomy. Cupping is performed by scarifying with a razor, and then applying over the cuts a horn, with a small hole at the narrow end, through which the air is abstracted by suction of the mouth, and is then plugged up. This has the same effect as rarefying the air by heat, and the blood flows copiously.

There was some alarm created in the house on the Saturday preceding, by the sudden and violent illness of M. Beaudin; who, having received from St. Jean d'Acre, where the plague was raging, a packet of letters, which he had handled and opened without the necessary precaution of fumigation, was supposed to have been infected: but the prevalence of fevers at Hamah better accounted for his indisposition. Yet he was possessed so strongly with the idea of having been infected by the pestiferous effluvia from his letters, that he was rendered very wretched in his mind. However, in a day or two, he found himself so much better as to recover his courage. The precautions which Franks and Christians use, when this malady reigns in the country, have been so often described, that I throw them rather into a note, than into the body of my narrative: and I would leave them out altogether, if I could do so consistent with the influence they have on the mode of living in the Levant.[1]

[1] As soon then as it is known that danger of infection threatens, people shut themselves up in their houses, lay in a

I pronounced the khodja out of danger on the 27th. He had constantly desired I should see him, but I never altered his treatment.

I received a visit from a Turk named Abd ed Dyn

stock of provisions of every kind, admit nobody to enter, and suffer nobody to go out: for which purpose the master of the house keeps the key of the street door. A Turk, (and some one is always to be found among the poor) for a small gratuity, purchases and brings every day meat, vegetables, and such things as form no part of the dry stock. All letters are received in vinegar, or over the fumes of nitre and sulphuric acid, or of assafetida, or of burnt feathers and the like. All cats are killed. Bread is aired for a day before being used: meat and vegetables are put in water to soak, and the hairs, &c. are carefully picked off by small tongs. Where a family is large, and has a spacious house or garden, there are no great hardships: as there is only the confinement and the interruption of business to complain of. But they fall very heavily on the poor, whose labour is suspended for so long a period, sometimes six months or more, and who are thus reduced to the miserable alternative of dying of the plague or of hunger. There is one great disadvantage resulting from the strictness of these regulations. No doctor can visit such as are infected; for, if he do, all other patients will refuse him admittance to their houses. If he be a stranger, and consequently a lodger, even the door of his own house would be shut against him. Hence no researches can be made on the disease, no experiments tried: and, excepting what light the French expedition in Egypt may have thrown on it, and the experiments of a few devoted men in the hospitals at Constantinople—mankind is no wiser than it was an age

Aga, who had fought at the battle of Fuley, and been wounded in six places. He passed high encomiums on the bravery of the French.

Lady Hester, having now fulfilled the great object for which she had come to Hamah, namely, the journey to Palmyra, and having enjoyed sufficiently the scenery and novelties of the place and its environs, resolved to set off for Latakia, on the sea-coast. Previous to our departure, the horses were bled and new shod. We had no groom that could bleed a horse in the jugular vein, nor do the Turkish farriers bleed in that place; but, as Nasýf Pasha had expressed a wish to see it done, I undertook it, and he accordingly attended.

And here I cannot help introducing some remarks on a most gross and unfounded calumny against the Turks, which has been copied from one book of travels into another, touching the origin of a custom which prevails throughout Turkey, but which has been

ago. In a word, the plague makes about as much impression in Turkey as a malignant epidemic in England. Its ravages are generally confined to the Mahometans, whose system of fatalism allows them to make use of few or no precautions against it; although there are many who do not hold so strong to their principles but they would willingly shut themselves up if they dared. But the zealots of the Mahometan religion immediately cry shame upon them, and thus compel them to submit to their destiny. Such however have a strong struggle between their fears of death and the dread of imputed dereliction of the tenets of their holy prophet.

principally commented upon at the audiences of European ambassadors at the Porte. I allude to the ceremony of being supported under the arm by two attendants when introduced into the Imperial presence. This has been construed into a measure of precaution against any attack, by such as are introduced, on the person of the Sultan or his ministers. But, setting aside the absurdity of supposing that every embassy was a band of assassins, it is notorious to all those acquainted with the usages of Turkey that persons high in rank, or to be greatly honoured upon any occasion, are supported on either side by two attendants. Thus it was that Nasýf Pasha, obliged to come on foot into the field where our horses were tethered, was led, as an infirm man would be, by two of his servants; and, although a fresh-looking, handsome, and strong man, he leaned on them as though he was helpless.[1] Again at Brusa, where, on one occasion, a deposed pasha came to pay a visit to the governor whilst Mr. B. and I were with him, the latter rose and advanced to the door of the room to receive him, and supported him to the upper seat by placing his arm under the pasha's arm-pit. Ahmed Bey, at Damascus, was always led thus from sofa to sofa. Yet these very personages, when on horseback, would throw the javelin with a degree of force little compatible with physical debility. We therefore can have no doubt that this mode of introduction into the

[1] When he leaneth on my hand.—ii Kings, v. xviii.

presence of the Grand Signor is intended to do honour to the members of the embassy, and we must hold as ill informed those writers who assert the contrary; nor can such persons, who, being admitted to a presentation, have rejected the proffered assistance of the servants, be considered otherwise than as petulant and ill-bred.

As to the question whether that French ambassador was justified in what he did, who refused to enter the Imperial presence at Constantinople unless with his sword on, it is for masters of court etiquette to determine. Only thus much is to be said, that in Turkey, in (what we should call in familiar language) dress parties, it is the height of vulgarity to go armed with a sabre, which is the Mahometan's sword; and if, at a levee of the King of England, a foreign ambassador at his court would look ridiculous without his sword, then there, where custom requires exactly the reverse, the reverse becomes the best breeding. When Lady Hester's dragoman at Damascus was shut out from the audience chamber because he was armed, it was not because they feared that a stripling, and he a Greek, could do mischief, but because a high-bred courtier from Constantinople chose to retain, even in the provinces, the usages of the metropolis.

Whilst I was in this place, I took lessons in Arabic, in writing and reading, of an old schoolmaster, named Basili, of the Greek church. With respect to the

education of children in Syria, there are day-schools in every town and village, the same as in England; with this difference, however, that children are taught not at so much per week, per month, or per annum; but an agreement is entered into, that, for a certain sum, a boy shall be made to read—for as much more to write, and so on. It does not matter how long or how short a time is expended; but the money is not paid until the boy's progress amounts to a completion of the agreement. Thus it becomes the interest of the teacher to perfect his scholar as fast as possible. It would seem that rods for the chastisement of children are not used in Turkey, as, though I was in the habit of entering many people's houses, I never saw any.

In the same way doctors agree with their patients, in almost all chronic maladies, to cure them for so much; and to this end a written agreement is drawn up, the basis of which is, "No cure, no pay." In acute diseases, where experience has taught that attention and skill may sometimes prove unavailing, the practitioner claims a greater latitude for himself, and receives half his gratuity for medicines supplied, and the other half if the patient recovers.

Hamah is full of Mahometans who wear green turbans; that is, those who are the reputed descendants of their Prophet; so that every third person you address has the title of Säyd prefixed to his name.

CHAPTER VIII.

Departure from Hamah—Encampment on the bank of the Orontes—Transformation of aquatic to winged animals—Vale of the Orontes—Calât el Medýk—Bridge and village of Shogre—Topal Ali makes himself independent of the Pasha of Aleppo—Singular application of a Jewess—Poverty of the inhabitants of Shogre—Visit to Topal Ali—Gebel el Kerád—Beautiful Scenery—Tribe of Ansáry—Lady Hester stays behind among them—Latakia.

On the 10th of May, Lady Hester and Mr. B. left Hamah. A sick servant, the Emir el Akhûr, who was dismissed from his place, but to whom I was willing to render service as long as I could to put him out of danger, kept me one day after the rest had departed. On the 11th I quitted the suburbs at noon. The road seemed to lead aslant to the chain of mountains which is seen west of Hamah, and which, by a pocket compass, as well as the distance would allow, I found to run north by east, and south by west. The country was cultivated and the soil rich, like that to the south of Hamah. I was accompanied by a servant and a muleteer, with his mule to carry

my luggage. At three o'clock we came abreast of Shayzer, where is a castle, which, from the distance I saw it, seemed to have been a place of great strength. This place is the ancient Larissa, built at the confluence of some stream with the Orontes, which is described in Abulfeda as falling from a mound fourteen cubits high. This mound is called El Kherteleh. Here we turned short to the right, and arrived at a bridge over the Orontes or Aâsy. We crossed it, and in a few minutes reached the spot where Lady Hester was encamped, on the right bank of the river, and whence, at the moment, the baggage-mules were setting off for the next station.

Her ladyship was not yet on horseback, nor was her tent struck, and Mr. B. was asleep on a bank by the river-side; so I dismounted, sending my servant and muleteer forward with the rest, and I sat down by the side of the Orontes, at an elbow of the stream, which formed an eddy, where hundreds of small fish of the size of shrimps were playing on the surface of the water. They attracted my attention: over them numbers of a kind of butterfly were skimming about.[1] A shoal of large fish was mixed with the small fry, not seeming to devour or harm them; but whenever any of the butterflies incautiously touched the surface of the water, they were immediately swallowed up by them. Observing more closely, I saw that the business of these butterflies was to fasten

[1] History of Insects, order *Trichoptera*.

themselves, by means of two long trailing feelers which grew from their tails, to the head of the little fish swimming in the water; then, exerting all the force their wings gave them, they pulled and pulled until by degrees they extricated another animal like themselves from the filmy skin which had just now covered it. No sooner was it at liberty than, flying to and fro, the newly metamorphosed one, now a butterfly, seemed to seek to perform the same office for another fish. Many were eaten by the large fish in the very act of shedding their skin, and as many escaped to be devoured afterwards.

I caught one of the butterflies. Its body was an inch long, covered with circular scales one line in breadth and of a golden colour; the wings were of a blackish dove-colour; the head, which was small and black, was furnished with two curved horny antennæ, seemingly for defence; the tail, besides the two trailing feelers, which were two inches long and jointed, and which, as it flew, draggled in the water, had a double-horned and curved forceps like those on the head.

Near the bridge of Shayzer were several Arab encampments, but I did not learn the name of the tribe. They were shepherds, and paid tribute. Their huts were made of reeds, which they, however, principally occupy in winter, quitting them in summer for tents.

We did not leave this place until six o'clock, when the sun had lost its power, and the air was somewhat

cooled. It soon grew dark, so that I saw nothing of the country through which we passed. At nine we arrived at Calât el Medýk; and, descending a hill into the valley below the village, we reached our station in about half an hour. As it was late, and the tents were already fixed, we dined immediately and retired to rest: but the musquitoes were exceedingly troublesome, owing to the low marshy ground which the tent-men had chosen for the encampment, and which made me dread, moreover, the worst consequences for the health of the party. The grooms, in the morning, said that the horses had been much bitten by the flies during the night.

Daylight enabled us to examine the spot where we were. About six or seven hundred yards to the north of us, and at the very extremity of the ridge of a jutting hill, stood Calât el Medýk, a village enclosed in a ruinous fortress. This hill is the termination of a chain of some loftier ones which seemed to run to the north: but the view was so bounded, that their direction and extent were uncertain. Between the encampment and the castle, at the foot of the hill, stood a large quadrangular caravansery, handsomely built, but falling, from neglect, into ruins. To the north and by west, and to the west, extended a spacious vale, bounded on the west by lofty mountains, which seemed about two leagues distant from us, and are inhabited, as we shall afterwards see, by the Ansárys. On the east the vale is shut in by the hills above-

mentioned. The valley near us, and as far as the eye could see, had now the appearance of a fenny marsh, full of small lakes, formed by the inundation of the Orontes.[1]

The Orontes could be seen at first running north-west, and then winding along the foot of the Ansáry mountains. The vale, where not overflowed, was highly verdant.[2] I walked up the road by which we had descended the preceding evening, and found it to be through a steep defile. At the top of the hill, I turned off to the left towards the castle. Calât el Medýk is a piece of indifferent masonry of no great antiquity, though built probably anterior to the use of cannon: it has been repaired at different times, and there are only patches of the original structure. By these it seems to have consisted of a vaulted rampart,

[1] Abulfeda, who lived not far from Calât el Medýk, and most likely had often been there, describes these inundations as permanent. His words are—"The lake of Apamea (Calât el Medýk) consists of innumerable small pools and reed banks: but of these two are most remarkable, one to the south and one to the north. That to the south is more peculiarly called the Apamean lake, and is nearly half a league broad, but nowhere deeper than the height of a man. The soil is boggy, the banks are hedged with reeds and osiers. The papyrus is found here. The other lake is called the lake of the Christians, because the fishermen who live on it are chiefly of that religion. It is four times as large as the first mentioned."

[2] The grass near our tents was rich to rankness, and of the height of a man. This vale once fed 500 elephants and 30,000 mares. (See Strabo, l. xvi.)

surmounted by battlements, enclosing a space of sufficient size to contain, as it does at present, several habitations.



CALAT EL MEDYK.

On the north-east side of the castle I was fortunate enough to discover what I conjectured to be the ruins of the ancient city of Apamea.[1] The walls are in

[1] In the preface to the second volume of Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, the discovery of the site of Apamea is attributed to that gentleman, who was not, however, active enough to go in search of the ruins, which are not difficult to find. I, unluckily, was not aware that these ruins had not been seen or described by any modern traveller, and therefore did not make so correct an account of them as I otherwise should have done. The

part still standing, and their extent might easily be measured. There are the remains of a long colonnade running nearly north and south, which must have been extremely grand. The pillars are of the Corinthian order, all fallen, but in several places lying in ranges as they stood. The stones of which the edifices were composed are of very large dimensions, but less so than those of Palmyra, and of an inferior quality of stone, seemingly quarried from the hills in the environs; for the effects of the atmosphere were strongly marked upon them, showing them to want hardness. There are several *spiral* fluted columns, which seem to have belonged to a temple. Within the walls are two small eminences, but too diminutive to have been the sites of fortresses. What buildings stood on them, or what purposes they served, I could only conjecture. Apamea was built by Seleucus Nicator, and named after his wife.

There are many bee-hives at Calât el Medýk, which resemble in shape our earthenware chimney-tops; they are made of clay, baked in the sun. I tasted the honey, but it was not particularly good.

situation does not accord entirely with Strabo's description. He says (l. xvi.)—"Apamea stands in a level hollow, as it were on an island, made by the Orontes and two adjoining lakes." Strabo argues that it was once a very great city, because it was called by the Macedonians Pella, and Pella was their capital. For Apamea, see also Sozomeni Hist. vii. 15. Pococke says (because he did not chance to hit on these ruins)—"Upon the whole, it is nct certain where Apamea was situated."

We left Calât el Medýk at half-past two in the afternoon. On quitting Hamah, Muly Ismäel had assigned us a guard of two Delibashes.

The road now lay at the foot of the hills to the east of the vale ;[1] for it would have been impossible to keep a north-west direction, the point of the compass towards which Latakia lay, owing to the many lakes there are in the vale ; and, had not that obstacle existed, prudence forbade, at any time, the crossing the Ansáry mountains, unless by the usual road, as no security is afforded for the traveller out of it.[2]

A few minutes after three we came to a fine spring of water, issuing from the foot of the hill, which fed a number of pools to the left of us. The name of this spot is the Shreah Water. A short distance before arriving at it were two stone uprights, parts of a gateway of some large building, of the same style of architecture as the ruins of Apamea. Due west of the Shreah Water, about two miles, is Gemmyah, a hamlet of Arab huts, the inhabitants of which live by fishing. They spear the fish ; and one of our soldiers informed us that so abundant are fish in the Orontes, and in the small lakes, that it is sufficient, after dark, to thrust a barbed spear into the water, to bring out one every time.

[1] These hills extend from Calât el Medýk to Ryah.

[4] Colonel Boutin, a Frenchman, was assassinated soon afterwards, in these very mountains, in consequence of quitting the high road.

We pursued our way, and at every little distance encountered a rivulet crossing the road, issuing as before from the foot of the hills, which were now terminated by a low precipice. These springs were so copious as to form pools, and the waters of all of them were very clear. Some, we were told, were tepid, but those we tasted were not so; we did not, however, try them all.

Towards sunset we passed a Tel or conical mound, differing in nothing from those seen in the desert; our guides called it Tel el Amjyk. I had quickened my pace for the last two hours, in order to superintend the encampment myself, and to avoid the torment of the musquitoes by placing it on high ground: but when I had chosen it, the cook grumbled at being far removed from running water, so that, at half-past seven, we halted at another spot, Tel Kely-ed-dýn, close to a fine spring. During the whole of the day the flies had rendered the horses almost unmanageable; and we were half inclined to believe the assertion we had often heard made, that, during autumn, cattle were sometimes stung to death by them in this vale.[1] The grass hereabouts was so luxuriant, that a horse could not in twenty-four hours consume more than what he covered as he stood. During these first days

[1] "In summer the inundation subsides, but the lakes remain, and to the quantity of stagnant water thus formed is owing the pest of flies and gnats above mentioned." Burckhardt's Travels vol. ii. p. 135.

none of the animals had any corn. Clover and sweet herbs were mixed with the grass. We thought it strange that hay was never made of it, considering how abundant the grass grew; and we easily conceived how Seleucus fed here so large a number of elephants and mares—if indeed elephants eat grass.

In the course of this day's journey we observed several patches of an ancient paved road. The country, we were told, had no robbers hereabouts, and we slept in perfect security. We indeed saw, at every little distance, small encampments of Arabs, but these are stationary, and live by their flocks. They make rush mats, which are in request for fifty miles round.

It was near two o'clock when we left Tel Kely-eddýn; for Lady Hester found the heat so intolerable that she would not stir earlier. This used to vex much the two guards, who, thinking themselves qualified to instruct us how to travel in their own country, were constantly enforcing the necessity of rising early and of travelling in the cool of the morning, so as to reach betimes our evening station, and thus to enable the tent-men to pitch by daylight, as their work was exceedingly difficult to do in the dark. This counsel was very good but very useless, as Lady Hester would not change her hours for anybody; excepting on our return from Palmyra, when prudence perhaps got the better of her habits.

It was near four when we came to Tel Ketýn, from the top of which I observed, by compass, that our

course, during the morning, had been S.S.W. ½ S.: looking onward it was N. From Tel-Kety-ed-Dyn the hills on the right had receded considerably, forming a half-moon, the centre of the curve being due E. of Tel-Ketyn. After quitting this Tel, the appearances of a paved road were very manifest for half a league, during which we continued on it; until, inclining to the left, we struck across a most fertile plain, nearly covered with corn-fields, and abounding, where uncultivated, with grass four feet high, intermixed with clover. About seven, we ascended a small eminence, from which the Orontes again became visible, winding at the foot of finely wooded mountains. We descended once more, and arrived in half an hour at the bridge called Geser el Shogr, where we pitched our tents on a green plat of ground close by the river.

The Orontes here is not broader than at Hamah. In its broadest parts, thus far, it scarcely exceeds the Isis at Oxford, and does not seem deeper, but is much more rapid. There are numerous islets in and about it, but fewer gardens than at Hamah, owing to the height of its banks, which renders it impossible to make a wheel with a diameter sufficient to dip. The town of Shogr is miserable and poor; yet its situation, commanding the bridge of communication across the Orontes and the great caravan road from Aleppo and Hamah to the coast, makes it a place of considerable importance. It is a dependency of the pashalik of Aleppo: but Topal Ali, an officer of the Deláti, ap-

pointed to the government of it, having turned rebel, set himself up as a petty chieftain, and had contrived to become master of a considerable tract of the mountains, with so much of the plain as lies between the river and Tel-Kelyeen. Rageb, pasha of Aleppo, on one occasion, endeavoured to reduce him to obedience, and for that purpose assembled an army of three or four thousand men. But Topal Ali, although with fewer soldiers, had so little fear, that, instead of shutting himself up in his fortress, or fleeing to the inaccessible parts of the mountains, he marched out to meet him; and, the pasha's army being principally composed of Deláti, would not fight against their old comrade and officer, and remained neuter. The other mercenaries, seeing themselves deserted, fled, and were pillaged by Topal Ali's troops. Not wishing, however, to irritate the pasha, Topal Ali afterwards restored his artillery, camp equipage, &c. At this time, by means of bribes, he had obtained permission to hold his government as the apanage of some person in the Seraglio: but it was evident that he thought himself insecure, as he was obliged to keep in his pay more troops than his means could afford. He was lame (hence his appellation of Topal), and seemed about forty years old.

We had not been long encamped when a rather ludicrous circumstance occurred. Lady Hester had, on more than one occasion, related the prophecy of the fortuneteller respecting her — that she should

one day be queen of the Jews. It appeared that this had been retold, with, as is usual, some exaggerations, one of which we will suppose was that she was herself a Jewess: for a woman of the people of Israel really came from the town to the tents, and asked to see her ladyship; when, being referred to me, she gravely asked me whether she might be employed to kill her meat. I did not at first comprehend her: and told her that the Aga had sent us lambs, which the cook would kill. "What! he is a Jew then?" said she. (It is known to most persons that Jews may eat only of what has been killed by people of their own religion.)—"Why, what if he is not?"—"What, if he is not?" cried she: "is not the meleky [the queen] one of us, and how can she eat from other hands than ours?" I now comprehended the woman's drift; for I had so often heard Turks say they were sure she was a daughter of the Grand Signor by some English lady, and the Jews convert prophecies from holy writ to her person, that I was no longer astonished at any thing of this kind. I related the story to Lady Hester, who sent the woman a small present. Topal Ali in the mean time had sent a couple of lambs, rice, fowls, sugar, and whatever could be wanted for eating—the customary way, as has been more than once said, of welcoming distinguished strangers.

A messenger had been sent to Laodicea or Latakia, to ascertain whether the plague raged there or not;

and it was resolved to await his return before proceeding any farther.

Close to our encampment was the gibbet on which malefactors were executed. It consisted of two rough forked stakes with a cross piece, scarcely trimmed with a hatchet. When a felon is caught, he is forthwith taken before the governor, and, if the evidence of his guilt is clear, he is, in the same instant, conveyed to the gallows, and hanged without any formality; or he is tied hand and foot and thrown over the bridge.

I walked into the town, and was shocked at the misery that displayed itself. A large mosque, the governor's house,[1] and a bath, formed, as it were, the whole of it: for the houses of the inhabitants were so mean that wretchedness itself could not be lodged worse. The clothes of the artisans and mechanics at work in their shops indicated either real or affected misery: for the garb of poverty is generally so common in Turkey, wherever the law cannot control the oppression of the ruler and his deputies, that no argument can be drawn from it of the real state of people's pockets. Nor is a province always accounted the poorer because apparently groaning under oppressive management—nay, it often happens that, under a licentious soldiery, the profits of manual labour and

[1] It appears that at the distance of bow-shot from Shogr there was another castle.

goods are greater: witness the desire so often expressed in Cairo for the return of the Mamelukes, under whose reign there was so little security for property, and so much rapacity on the part of the Beys: yet were large fortunes often amassed, and much more speedily than now.

In the bazar lazy soldiers were sitting, smoking and drinking iced water; for the weather was become exceedingly hot: others were at the doors of barbers' shops. A few squalid and poorly dressed Christians were moving about on their business. Wishing to hear the news of the day, I entered a barber's shop. As is customary, a round looking-glass with a handle to it (such as mermaids are represented as holding,) was handed to me to see my face in. This is the usual compliment to such as merely enter to gossip, and they place a para or two upon it when presented to them.

Surgery forms part of a barber's education in the East. Whilst sitting there, a man came in to have blood taken from his ears, which was very expeditiously and neatly done in the following manner. The patient held a handkerchief round his neck, which he was desired to draw as tight as he could bear, and this he did so effectually that he soon became black in the face: scarifications were then made on the upper edge of the ear by scoring it with a razor. Not much blood came away; although, on other occasions, I have seen it flow very freely.

Mr. B. paid a visit to Topal Ali, and on his return to the tents a horse was sent to him as a present. Topal Ali desired his katib (or secretary) to seek me out, and ask me to call on him, which I did. He assumed more importance than I had observed in several of the first men of the empire, and seemed a vain-glorious man. He asked me for remedies to render him more amiable in the eyes of his harým: but I told him I was unable to afford him the assistance he required.

In the evening, we were disquieted by an officious peasant, who came to inform us, with much mystery, that twelve soldiers had been seen lurking at a short distance from the encampment, and that, as the gates of the town were shut, these men could not be there with any good intention. This information created some alarm, and we were somewhat on the alert throughout the night; but nobody molested us.

To-day the messenger returned from Laodicea, and brought letters which denied the existence of the plague there: we accordingly set off the next day at eight o'clock. On quitting Shogr, the road begins to ascend into the mountains. These, unlike Mount Lebanon, were clothed with trees and covered with verdure. Their ascent was more gentle, and their breaks were less precipitous: there were slopes for corn fields, and levels capable of irrigation. We continued to mount, and passed a large village called Damat. We then came to a small river, near which

is Castel el Frange, which is the extent of Topal Ali's district in this direction, and may be about three hours and a half from Geser. At three o'clock we came to another river, Ayn-el-Zerky, and encamped there for the night.

At half-past seven in the morning, we left Ayn-el-Zerky. Soon after eight, we crossed a small bridge, built over a cleft in the rock thirty feet deep, at the bottom of which ran a small river. It is called Shaykh-el-Agûf. It is not more than six feet over, but, when looked into, had so much the appearance of a horrible chasm as to make us shudder.

About noon we reached the foot of Mount Sekûn. The tract we had passed, which begins at Damat and ends here, is called Gebel-el-Kerád. The road this day had presented some of the most beautiful scenery that nature can boast of. Our course, as it wound among the mountains, led us sometimes through groves of plum, fig, and pomegranate trees ; sometimes over a wild of myrtles, arbutuses, and other flowering shrubs : again it conducted us along the banks of a river, which, taking its source from the spring where we had encamped over night, had now increased to a large stream, and, as it meandered in the valley, or rushed down some descent, gave an admirable finish to the landscape. Oaks and firs covered the highest mountains ; cornfields and agricultural produce the valley. Scattered cottages, here and there, wore the appearance of English farms, and recalled the idea of my

country, with embellishments in which a colder climate cannot be dressed. Altogether, the valley of Sekûn was a most rich and luxuriant scene.

On our way, the remains of an aqueduct, made of finely cemented brick-work, were to be seen in one or two small patches. It is probable that the water of the river, or a portion of it, was anciently carried to some town,[1] and there were certain indications that a road had once run along by its side.

When our tents were pitched, several inhabitants of the neighbouring hamlets came to stare at us. We were now in the midst of the Ansáry, a tribe of mountaineers, of whom we had heard many strange stories. Gebel Sekûn,[2] which overhung our encampment, is said to contain many impregnable fortresses, to which, when attacked by a superior force, the inhabitants flee for refuge. It is one of the highest of that chain of mountains which runs parallel to the sea-coast, north and south, from the termination of Mount Lebanon, a few miles to the north of Tripoli, up to Antioch; and seems to be one of the strongholds which secure the independence of this warlike race; for all those who dwell upon and about it are com-

[1] Laodicea, as I conceive. Josep. de Bel. Jud., i. xxi., relates that Herod built an aqueduct near this spot.

[2] Or Sehyûn (Abulfeda, p. 122.) This is called by him an impregnable fortress, and one of the most celebrated in Syria. In the neighbourhood is a valley where grows an abundance of fruits.

paratively free, whilst those between it and the sea pay tribute to the governor of Latakia.

Our guards, who were now two of Topal Ali's soldiers, beheld the Ansárys with distrust, and endeavoured to inspire us with it too: but their demeanour was peaceable; and, although there was nothing like timidity in their manner, their address was not rude. As I was seated at the door of my tent smoking, they came and placed themselves close by me. Soon after arrived others; and then those already seated rose, and, with most prolonged ceremoniousness, gave place to the new comers, or preserved their precedence. The Drûzes likewise are reproached with being much given to useless ceremony and complimentary speech. The Ansárys were all armed, some with a brace of pistols in their girdle, and all with khanjárs.

Lady Hester thought their appearance and air so military that she resolved to encamp a day longer among them. I have no doubt, too, that she was anxious to learn something of a people of whom such extraordinary things are reported; and when she was intent on any plan which required much penetration and great conduct, she generally chose to be alone. Under pretence, therefore, of staying behind until a house was prepared for her, she requested us to depart next day for Latakia.

Next morning accordingly Mr. B. and I, with the principal part of the luggage, set off at seven in the

morning. We had to ascend until we reached the summit of the mountain, from which the descent is gradual, and leads almost imperceptibly, on a level with the sea, to the city of Laodicea, now called in Arabic el-Ladkýah. But the river which we had seen on the preceding day winds, by a circuitous course, round the foot of Mount Sekûn, and reappears on the other side, emptying itself afterwards, under the name of Nahr-el-Kebýr, at a short distance from the city.

The season of the year was calculated to produce a favourable impression of the beauty of the country. There was no similarity whatever between the coast here and at Sayda. Round Latakia all was verdure, and the climate seemed to be just at that point at which the sun's rays are insufficient to burn up the soil, but still capable of producing the fruits that are generally thought to require considerable heat. Here the date, it is true, does not bear; but there are melons, grapes, and figs, in the greatest abundance. Such were our first impressions, as we traversed the environs of Latakia. A residence of seven months, the latter part of which was a continued scene of suffering, caused me to view the same picture with such different feelings, that I quitted it at last with more pleasure than I ever did any place in my life.

Lady Hester did not arrive until two days afterwards, and it was said that she had completely gained the hearts of the mountaineers among whom she had

been encamped. This may be readily believed, for there never was a person who could, like her, when she thought it worth while, on all occasions, and with all classes, engage and secure admiration and attachment.

CHAPTER IX.

Residence at Latakia—Remains of Antiquity—Port—Gardens— Sycamore — Birdlime tree — Vegetables and fruit — Tobacco — Salt tanks — Sponge fishery — Hanah Kûby — Fanaticism of the Turks of Latakia—A Barbary Shaykh—The Plague — Habits of the Mahometans accordant with common sense—Epidemic illness — Impalement of a Malefactor — Ravages of the Plague — Mr. Barker, British Consul at Aleppo, comes to spend some time near Latakia—Hard fate of a Christian—Experiment on a fruit diet—Imprudence of smoking in the streets during Ramazán—Amusements—Sporting — Departure of Mr. B. for England—Civility of the Greek Patriarch—Illness of Lady Hester, and of the Author—She supposes her disease to be the Plague—Illness of servants—Scarcity of provisions—Departure for Sayda—Turkish Lugger —Tripoli—Aspect of Mount Lebanon—Arrival at Sayda—Seamanship of the Turks.

There was a spacious mansion in Latakia, which, from its size and the expense required to keep it up, had been for some time empty. This was hired, unfurnished, for three months, at the rate of 500 piasters per month; whereas it would have been well paid for

at 150. Here Lady Hester and Mr. B. took up their residence, whilst, with the view of seeing patients, I hired a house for myself, which I occupied, with two servants, Tanûs, whom I engaged on my arrival at Latakia, and my groom, Ibrahim. In the courtyard were tethered my two horses, night and day in the open air, but, as the yard was small, and they could almost snuff each other's breath, they were constantly breaking loose and fighting. Lady Hester was hardly well housed when she wrote a long letter to the Marquis of Sligo, a great portion of which, as descriptive of her journey into the Desert, I shall be excused for inserting.

Extract of a Letter from Lady Hester Stanhope to the Marquis of Sligo.

Latakia, 1813.

* * * * * *

* * * * I must first mention my entry at Damascus, which was one of the most singular and not one of my least exploits, as it was reckoned so dangerous, from the fanaticism of the Turks in that town. However, we made a triumphal entry, and were lodged in what was reckoned a very fine house in the Christian quarter, which I did not at all approve of. I said to the doctor, I must "take the bull by the horns," and stick myself under the minaret of the great mosque. This was accomplished, and we found ourselves, for three months, in the most distinguished part of the Turkish quarter. I went out in a variety of dresses every day, to the great astonishment of the Turks, but no harm happened. A visit to the pasha on the night of the Ramazán was magnificent indeed: 2,000 attendants and guards lined the staircase, antechambers,

&c. The streets were all illuminated, and there were festivities at all the coffee-houses. The message of invitation was accompanied by two fine Arab horses, one of which I mounted, and I am sorry to say they are both since dead of the glanders. But this is enough for Damascus. I must now go to the Arabs, only just mentioning that constant dinners and fêtes were given to the great Turks and their harýms during my long stay.

I did not delay long in making my arrangement with an Arab chief to go to Palmyra, which the pasha, hearing of, greatly disapproved, and said he should send me there himself in security. But, when this business was examined into, I found that at a place about three days' journey from Damascus we were to be joined by nearly 1000 men to escort us. The expense and trouble of such an escort and the difficulty of managing such a body of troops put it entirely out of the question: so I affected to give up the plan entirely, and set off to Hamah, not to do anything palpably rude towards the pasha. I cannot enter into the detail of the second negociation with the Arabs, nor of the dreadful stories that were told us of the danger we were running into: but all that did not deter me from my purpose. In March, we set off with the two sons of the King of the Desert, forty camels loaded with provisions, and water, and presents, twenty horsemen, the Doctor, Mr. B., myself, and an Arab dragoman, a second dragoman, and a mameluke, two cooks, a caffagi, four Cairo säyses, the Emir el akoar, or stud-groom, Mr. B.'s valet, and Madame Fry, two sakas or water-carriers, my slave, two ferráses or tent-pitchers, with an escort of Arabs. On the second day we arrived at the tents of the King of the Arabs, who had advanced to the borders, on purpose to meet us. We remained there a day, and were very much entertained with Arab stories and civility. I then requested the emir to move his camp to the northward. We proceeded, and passed through some other tribes, and encamped at night

among the Beni Hez. The next day we passed through the Beni Kaleds, and encamped in a very desolate place, but sent for a guard from the tribe of the Sebáh, who were not very far off.

Having visited the tribes of the Melhem, the Beni Hez, the Beni something else, and the Sebáhs, we arrived on the eighth day at Palmyra. We met 2000 of the Sebáhs upon their march, descending into the plain where we were reposing from the Beláz, a mountain pass, with all their fine mares, little colts, little camels, little children, and hideous women, with the most extraordinary head-dresses, and extraordinary rings at their noses, and preposterously tatooed in flowers and frightful figures.

You must not understand Palmyra to be a desolate place, but one in which there are 1500 inhabitants. The chief and about 300 people came out about two hours' distance to meet us. He and a few of the grandees were upon Arab mares, and dressed rather more to imitate Turks than Arabs, with silk shawls and large silk turbans. The men, at least many of them, had their whole bodies naked, except a pestimal or petticoat studded or ornamented with leather, blackamoor's teeth, beads, and strange sorts of things that you see on the stage. They were armed with matchlocks, and guns, all surrounding me, and firing in my face, with most dreadful shouts and savage music and dances. They played all sorts of antics, till we arrived at the triumphal arch at Palmyra. The inhabitants were arranged in the most picturesque manner on the different columns leading to the Temple of the Sun. The space before the arch was occupied with dancing girls, most fancifully and elegantly dressed, and beautiful children placed upon the projecting parts of the pillars with garlands of flowers. One, suspended over the arch, held a wreath over my head. After having stopped a few minutes, the procession continued: the dancing girls immediately surrounded me. The lancemen took the lead,

followed by the poets from the banks of the Euphrates, singing complimentary odes, and playing upon various Arabian instruments. A tribe of hale Palmyrenes brought up the rear, when we took up our habitation in the Temple of the Sun, and remained there a week.

I must tell you that the difficulty of this enterprise was that the King of the Desert was at war with some very powerful Arabs, and it was from them we were in dread of being surprised, particularly as it was known that they had said that they could sell me for 25,000 piasters, or 300 purses, and which they certainly thought they could get for my ransom at home. This was the most alarming part of the business. Our people, nevertheless, went out robbing every day, and came home with a fine khanjár, and some visible spoil. We heard of nothing but the advance of the enemy to the east of Palmyra, and we believed it, as we had taken five of their scouts prisoners, which we thought well secured at Palmyra; but, unfortunately, one night one got out, and, fearing that he would give the intelligence of what day we were to begin our journey back again, we set off before our intended time. We were, nevertheless, pursued by 300 horses a few hours off, which fell upon the tribe of the Sebáhs, and killed a chief, and took some tents, and the Sebáhs, on their side, carried off twenty-two mares. We returned a different way, having made acquaintance with the tribe of the Amoors, the Hadideens, the Wahabas, and another battalion of Sebáhs, including Wahabees, and a party of hunting Arabs, that are dressed in the skins of wild beasts. We arrived in safety at the tents of the Grand Emir, Mahannah el Fadel, who gave us a fine Arab feast, and killed a camel, of which we partook. At two hours from Hamah, we were met by a corps of Delibashes, who were sent as a complimentary escort by Moli Ismael, a man of great note in Syria, who conducted us to his house, where dinner was prepared for 300 people, and

corn provided for all the Arab mares. Within a mile of Hamah, full 10,000 people were assembled out of curiosity, half of which were women, and many women of distinction, with Nasif Pasha's children carried by slaves. *Mashallah* echoed from every mouth. Selâmet-ya meleky, selâme, ya syt (welcome, queen—welcome, madam); El hamd Lillah (thank God); Allah kerym, (the Lord is gracious); and this very interesting scene proved my ladyship's popularity in Hamah.

Nothing in the world could have been so well managed, which proves me an élève of Colonel Gordon's, for I was at once quarter-master, adjutant, and commissary-general. We were as comfortable upon our road as if we were at home, and the Duke of Kent could not have given out more minute orders, or have been more particular in their being executed, which, in fact, is the only way of performing a thing of that sort with any degree of comfort.

We were excessively entertained with the different conversations of these people, and the extravagant though elegant compliments they paid me. They have got it into their heads that the only power which can affect them is Russia. They were always thanking God that I was not Empress of Russia, otherwise their freedom would be lost. I am now getting translated into Arabic all the real achievements of the Emperor Alexander, on purpose to send to my friends in the Desert. They are the most singular and wonderfully clever people I ever saw, but require a great deal of management, for they are more desperate and more deep than you can possibly have an idea of. It would have very much amused you to see me riding like a Bedouin woman in a bird's-nest made of carpeting upon a camel, and upon one of the fleet dromedaries like a Wahabee. I am enrolled as an Anisy Arab in the tribe of the Melhem, and have now the rights of the Desert, particu-

larly that of recommending my friends who may wish to visit them.

After my return to Hamah, the immense number of Arabs that waited on me from all quarters was quite surprising. You think we have been losing our time in Syria, but certainly we have seen in great perfection what nobody else has, not even your friend Shaykh Ibrahim, who, going under consular protection, was stripped stark naked in coming from Palmyra, and, after having marched some days in this happy state, got a pair of shalwars (trousers) at a village, and, in this figure, entered Damascus. As for Mr. W****, he certainly crept there like a thief in the dark, when the Arabs were several days' journey to the eastward. The Palmyrenes are the best mimics in the world; and, one day, when I was looking over Zenobia's pleasure house, a very clever Palmyrene bubbled and blustered just like him, and he said Mr. W**** complained bitterly of the cold. Then (rubbing the two palms of his hands together to imitate him) he added, " He says he is the son of a vizir." " Oh! then," rejoined one of the Arabs who accompanied us, " it cannot be a vizir of the true race: the man is a booby; he spread out his hands too, and exposed them to the cold, when he ought to have wrapped them up in his abah. Pooh!" added he, blowing his fingers, and making a sign of contempt, "he is good for nothing." I only saw one mare, a Wahabee, that I thought perfection. The owner said he would not part with her for less than one hundred purses. The generality of their horses and mares is by no means so beautiful as you would imagine, but beyond anything excellent for swiftness and fatigue. I could write volumes upon different circumstances that took place on this interesting journey, which I certainly recommend to no traveller to undertake without being well aware of the *carte du pays*, and having considerable abilities to plan, and great energy to go through with it. When you are once in the scrape, nobody

can get you out of it, for no pasha has sufficient authority over them to be the least depended upon. They no sooner heard of our intention of going with the pasha's people than they said they should cut off all their beards and send them naked about their business. For my part, I believe they would have been as good as their word. The idea of telling them cock-and-bull stories, and treating them like fools, is perfectly incorrect: they are much more difficult to manage than any Europeans I have ever seen.

I always went dressed like a Bedouin Arab, and rode with provisions under a sort of red rug upon my horse, and a water-bottle and a chief's lance. Mr. B. and the doctor had beards and were dressed in the same style, with sheepskin pelisses, some tanned, some covered with Bagdad flowered cottons, and over that abahs, which are a sort of woollen cloaks, some white with great gold flourishes woven in upon the back and shoulders, others with plain and large stripes of black and white, a quarter of a yard wide. There was a chief there that Lord Petersham would die of envy before, as he was as *eveillé* as a Frenchman, and presented himself with the air of Lord Rivers or the Duke of Grafton. Respecting etiquette and politeness, these people certainly far exceed even the Turks; but for eloquence and beauty of ideas (though one can hardly be a judge of it), they undoubtedly are beyond any other people in the world.

To expect a frigate upon this coast till the plague is quite gone is out of the question, and to pop into a nasty infected ship would be folly. As far as country and a good house goes, we are very comfortable; as well off now as ill off last winter.

Believe me,

Dear Lord Sligo,

Yours sincerely,

HESTER LUCY STANHOPE.

In these distant countries the arrival of strangers was in those times an event of importance among the few Europeans of the place, and "Have you seen the mylady who is just come from Hamah?" was the question of the day.

By what I could learn from the mention of visits of this sort made by former travellers, there was no one, however distinguished his rank, who had not sought with avidity the society of these Europeans as his only resource among barbarians: for so the Turks are called by most persons who travel among them. Such was not the practice of Lady Hester. Unless a European, from situation or talents, had some claim to her acquaintance, she always refused to see him: and the wife of a factor, in the town where we now were, in vain solicited, during six months, the honour of being presented to her, although the only European-born woman in the place. I however was soon acquainted with them all: and, as there was an epidemic fever raging on our arrival, my professional aid was called for on all sides; the more especially as I gave it gratuitously.[1]

When we were settled, and time was allowed for

[1] "The news that a foreign hakým or doctor was passing through the country was very soon spread abroad, and at every halt our camp was thronged with the sick, not only of the village near to which we were encamped, but of all the surrounding villages." Morier's Second Journey through Persia, p. 52.

examining the town and environs, I observed several remains of ancient edifices, which once adorned Laodicea, lying about in different directions, of some of which I took sketches. Going from the town to the port, (which two places are distant half a mile from each other) a single granite column was to be seen upright, but buried half its length among the graves of a cemetery. The soil was overgrown with flowers and weeds at this time. Close to it were five palm trees of different heights.

Two hundred paces to the north and east of this was a singular remnant of antiquity in an octagonal piece of marble, giving support to the main beam of a Persian waterwheel, one end of which rested upon it, as the other did upon the fluted shaft of a column. It was placed upside down, and had, on three of the eight faces, a long inscription in Greek capitals. The copying of it, from the unpleasant posture in which I was obliged to do it, took me up two mornings. Large blocks of stone and patches of a wall attested the former existence of some building on this spot.

There are several granite pillars scattered in and about the town. Thus, to the north of the citadel is one, and by the sea-side a piece of another. In one of the streets are no fewer than ten granite pillars, still upright, but without capitals. The intervals between them have been blocked up with masonry, and the whole forms the wall of a house. There are seven more incorporated in another wall; these and the ten

above mentioned are scarcely half their length out of the ground, proving how great must be the heaps of ruins which now cover their bases.

On the road from the town to the port there are four other granite columns lying flat and half buried in the soil, the capitals and pedestals of which are wanting.

In one of the streets of the city there were the remains of an ancient edifice, supposed to have been a temple. Four pillars, parts of two of the sides, were still upright, the shafts not being of a single stone, as is most frequently the case, but of four pieces. They are of the Corinthian order, and the blocks which form the architrave are very large. Within the court where they stood was the tomb of a holy Mahometan, named Shaykh Mohammed. Many devout persons visited the tomb, and hence mats were spread on the ground for the convenience of praying.

But the most perfect specimen of antiquity yet to be seen in Latakia is a square building, said to have been a triumphal arch. This supposed triumphal arch is now converted into a mosque, called Jamâ el Mezyad. It is in the street called Hart el Ashar, a small distance from the foot of the elevated spot of ground which commands Latakia from the east, and upon which once stood a castle or citadel. When the building was entire, the arch between the two pillars was open, but has been since blocked up with rude masonry. The pillars of the Corinthian order and the materials of the building are of a hard stone,

quarried in the neighbourhood; on the entablature are figures in bas-relief. Among them may be distinguished rams' heads with a collar round their necks, and bucklers: the second and fourth compartment (counting from the left) seemed to bear something like robes: the seventh and tenth have the appearance of helmets. But the troublesome curiosity of a crowd of Turks, who collected round me whilst I was drawing, prevented me from making such accurate observations as I could wish to have done.

Within, the dome is supported by eight pilasters, two at each angle of the square; they are Corinthian. Those of the two opposite faces are different, two sets being lower than the other two. The darkness of the inside prevented me from making out the bas-reliefs: for the light cannot enter except by the doorway. No inscription was found within or without. In this mosque the howling dervises perform their religious ceremonies.

I endeavoured to procure a ladder to mount up and examine the bas-reliefs on the outside: but the bystanders, having talked the matter over, said it could not be permitted, as I should thus be enabled to overlook the terraces of several houses in the neighbourhood, where possibly the harýms might be unsuspectingly diverting themselves unveiled.

Numbers of tombs and sarcophagi are to be seen in the environs of the city, but principally to the

north of it. The tombs are square chambers, with cells hewn in the sides. Some are cut out singly in the rock. One yet remains where there are three figures sculptured in high relief on the façade; but the figures are unfortunately much mutilated. The entrance to one tomb (four minutes' walk from the town) had two Ionic pillars: some had pilasters. On the sarcophagi, which are to be found hewn from single blocks of stone or marble, rams' heads are sculptured with wreaths of flowers; and these seem to have been the most common ornaments. It is not clear whether, in such cases, the block was not originally an altar, and had been subsequently hollowed out, not for the reception of a corpse, but for the purposes of a water-trough.

I observed, with respect to the sepulchres, that no rule is adhered to as to the direction of the head and feet.

There are, likewise, on the sea-shore, some caves, or chambers, hewn out of the solid rock, on a level with the sea, and which have openings to give the waves a free passage in and out. These are shown as baths, and are of the same construction with those which are to be seen in the neighbourhood of Alexandria, and which are named Cleopatra's baths.

The site of the ancient city appears to have extended much more to the north-east than the modern town, running between the castle hill and the promontory.

These are all the remains of what this city once was.[1] Its revolutions may be comprehended in a few words. It is one of those cities whose name is pure Greek; for the idiom of the Arabic tongue has transformed the Greek name of Laodicea, which by Europeans is generally called Latakia, into Ladkýah. The city contained 3,000 to 4,000 inhabitants, consisting of Mahometans, Christians, and a few European families. The Greeks had five or six churches, eight curates, and a bishop. There was a monastery for the Franciscans, a solid piece of masonry;[2] but there were no friars: and it was then occupied by the French consul, who let out the lower part as a caravansery. The few catholics who lived here were French and Italian. There was an English agent. Latakia is a dirty town. It was governed by a motsellem. There was a wall round the city, but of no strength, said to have been built by a Christian, one Hanah Kûby, who, in the time of the invasion of Egypt by the French, as I was told, governed the place.

The harbour of Latakia is distinct from the town. It is about two cables' length in breadth and width, with a very narrow entrance, formed by two jetties of

[1] It was built by Seleucus Nicator, and named after his mother. (Strab. i. xvi). Formerly it was famous for its vineyards, which occupied the hills behind the city.

[2] Abulfeda speaks of this building (p. 113.) "In it (*i. e.* Ladakyah) is a monastery . . . . called El Farûs, a beautiful structure."

stone-work in ruins. On the north jetty stands an old fort or castle, which is suffered to go to decay: upon it, on Fridays, a ragged Turkish flag was hoisted, scarcely visible above the parapet. The port seemed to have been anciently walled round, as there were patches of masonry still remaining on the south side: now, it would not admit vessels of above one hundred tons burthen. It was governed by the collector of the customs, who was at this time named Hosayn Aga. He was one of the few surviving of those Mamelukes bought and brought up by Gezzàr Pasha: and was said to retain something of the ferocity of his old master. His power was almost as great as that of the governor. There were several granite columns to be seen just under water, near the wharf, indicating that some ancient edifice had been thrown down by an earthquake.

Out of the town there were fine orchards and olive grounds. Of these the two best cultivated were Bostán el Bende and Bostán el Frangy, or the Franks' garden, one mile and a quarter from the town. And it is observable, in spite of all the lamentations that the European priests living in the Levant make over their privations and sufferings, that their houses and gardens are generally better than even those of the rich natives. We saw here olive trees much larger than any where else in our travels, and some of them that would have greatly pleased the lovers of rural scenery by their grotesque and knotted trunks, and by the

strange windings which the grape vines planted at their roots made among their branches. Nothing can be more beautiful than the face of the country around the city, combining every requisite for agriculture, for prospect, or for embellishment. Much oil is made here.

There were some sycamore-trees in the environs of the city, but their leaves and appearance were unlike the tree to which we give that name in England. The sycamore of the Levant and of Egypt somewhat resembles a large walnut-tree, but with a smaller leaf. It is most remarkable in its fruit, which is in shape like a fig, and in size as big as a medlar. Instead of growing on the sides and extremities of the minute or smaller branches, it springs upon little twigs which surround the trunk and the lower and thick part of the stoutest branches, where there are no leaves. It first ripens in August, and this crop is succeeded by another in October. It is eaten by the poor principally.[1]

The jujube-tree is common here. The henna plant is reared in pots.

The environs of Latakia produce a tree with a fruit the size of a gooseberry, and, when ripe, of a straw-colour, containing a viscid matter which serves for bird-lime. It is called in Arabic *dubbuk;* it grows to the height of an apple-tree, and has a leaf like a

[1] "Then answered Amos and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was a herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit."—Amos, vii. 14.

peach-tree. Bird-lime is prepared from it in the following manner by the gardeners of Latakia. Any number of ripe berries (say 200) being gathered, the person bites them in two, one by one, as fast as he can, and lets fall the husk, keeping the viscid matter (which adheres to a kernel) in his mouth, until he has extracted the produce of about twenty. He then spits the clot into his hand, which has been previously dipped in water, and throws it with a jerk, that it may not stick, into a large earthenware platter. This process he repeats, until he has bitten them all asunder; each time holding a little water in his mouth, and wetting his hand. He now beats this quantity with his two hands in a cross-fashion, like the shutting and opening of the blades of a pair of shears; adding, by degrees, about a breakfast cupful of water, a spoonful at a time. He then moves his hands round one another, until the viscid pulp has assumed the colour and appearance of whipped cream. About two table spoonfuls of honey are then added, and he beats it again with a rotatory motion and with the flat part of his hand downwards, until it becomes quite gluey, that is, for about a quarter of an hour. Twigs are then limed with this, and put in the sun. The same process is repeated the next day with fresh berries, and again a third time: after which the twigs are fit for use.

Scammony is said to be brought from this neighbourhood. The plants growing in the hedges here-

abouts are however but few; as there was much difficulty in finding even one.

Vegetables are very abundant and of great variety. Those of which the names were familiar to us were spinach, cabbage, cauliflower, radishes, of a very large size, beet-root, and a kind of turnip which grows on the summit of the stalk among the leaves just like a cauliflower. There is also a vegetable with long leaves like lettuce, called beet: also calabashes, gourds, cucumbers, Jews' mallows, kusas, long kusas, and some others to which we were unable to assign an English name: such as crunb, curnabýt, &c.

The vicinity of Cyprus afforded us some things which are not always attainable in Mahometan countries, such as lard, hams, &c.; but it is never worth while for a traveller in Turkey to make a parade of eating pork, so abominable in the eyes of the followers of Mahomet.

Fruits are numerous: figs, apples, pears, peaches, apricots, grapes, pomegranates, quinces, myrtle-berries, dates (which do not ripen here), sweet and water melons, olives which grow to a great size, sumág (a subacid berry, used in sauces), and others.

The tobacco, which forms a great article of home trade and exportation at Latakia, is not the growth of the immediate environs, but of the mountainous district of the Ansárys. It is known in the Levant by the name of Abu Ryah, and obtains its peculiar

odour from the process of smoke-drying not unlike that used in drying herrings in England.

Water was scanty, and the inhabitants were either obliged to drink from wells or from springs at a distance. That of the village of Besnada was considered the best.

To the south of the city, the river, which was seen on our last day's journey from Sekûn to Latakia, empties itself into the sea. About half a mile from the sea it was crossed by a bridge, over which passes the great coast road. The river, which here is almost navigable, goes by the name of Nahr-el-Kebyr, or Great River.

There is a rock which projects into the sea south of the harbour, and to which the natives of Latakia give the name of Seyd Lexis. It has several marks of either having been quarried or else of having served for baths, tanks, &c. There are still some salt tanks on it, which are used for the evaporation of the sea-water. Two or three poor men gain a livelihood by them, in conjunction with the occasional gains of angling, in which they employ their hours of watching.

A great sponge trade is carried on by Greeks of the Archipelago, who come annually, in smacks, about June, and remain until September. They seek them in a north-west or westerly direction, nearly out of sight of the shore. The time the divers remain under

water is considerable, and instances of the rupture of a blood-vessel, and of returning to the surface in an expiring state, sometimes occur. They bear in their hands a knife, to cut through the root of the sponge; in which, if they fail, their strength is insufficient to tear it up.

We have said above that the walls of Latakia were built by a Christian named Kûby, and that he governed the town. Some of his descendants still live at Leghorn. Examples of power, ceded to Nazarenes to such an extent as the magistracy, are very rare: nor was that of Mâlem Kûby sufficiently happy in its close to present temptations to others to imitate him. How Kûby obtained his elevated situation we did not learn: but it was probably by farming the taxes of the town at a higher price than any Moslem would give. He was assassinated by a Mahometan soldier, one of his own men. His government was in nothing distinguished from the ordinary routine of motsellems.

Kûby's family were, whilst we were at Latakia, in absolute poverty. Indeed such a thing as a Christian family of long standing scarcely exists in Turkey: for the aggrandizement of an individual is generally the prelude to his ruin. The secretaries of governors of towns, appointed by letters patent from the Porte, are those only who can hope to retain their situations for any number of years: for, as they do not owe their

appointment to the caprice of each succeeding governor, so they are not removed with him.

The district of Latakia, as being a portion of the pashalik of Tripoli, was now in the hands of Mustafa Aga Barbar, governor of Tripoli under Ali Pasha. This man, raised by his conduct and valour from the very dregs of the people, had, for the last three or four years, preserved entire tranquillity.

The Mahometans of Latakia seemed to me to be more devout and more religious, as far as external observances went, than those we had met with in other cities. Every night several individuals might be seen parading the streets, bawling in a dissonant tone,—"There is no other God but the Lord." Others, assembled together in rooms, formed themselves into a ring, and imitated the cries and impassioned gestures of the howling dervises, to the sound of the tabor. Whatever merit the religion of Mahomet may have, it certainly has no attractions from its liturgy: and, whether from the minaret or in the mosque, their chant is far from pleasant to the ear. We were able afterwards to account for this seemingly extraordinary devotion, which was owing to the late arrival of a Moorish shaykh, who, being a missionary and zealot in the cause of Islamism, had insinuated among the leading men of the place how great their remissness was in the exercise of their religious duties. His reproofs had operated so far upon them that they met to celebrate the noisy ceremonies above mentioned.

This zealot was a robust and comely man. He occasionally used to ride out on a handsome Arabian colt. He never would salute either a European or a Levantine Christian, but entertained a still stronger hatred against the sectaries of his own religion. Hence, it is said, he taught that the goods and lives of the Ansárys need not be respected by the followers of Abubekr. He lived in a costly way, and at other people's expense: for he was a stranger, and on his arrival had nothing. He was given to abominations: and it was his eloquence, not his actions, that obtained for him the reputation of sanctity. In the bath, one of his disciples was accustomed to depilate for him his whole body.

The customary marks of attention and respect were shown by the Motsellem and Kumrukgi[1] to Lady Hester on her arrival, by sending officers to say that she had only to make known her wants in order to their being immediately supplied.

The removal to the seacoast had been considered as a measure preparatory to our embarkation either for Malta or Russia. But there was now much uncertainty as to the practicability of such an event, on account of the general prevalence of plague along the coast, which made it hazardous to employ vessels of the country, whilst European ships kept aloof until the danger of infection should be over.

[1] Kumrukgi, the collector of the customs and captain of the port.

The existence of the plague at Latakia was not yet clearly established, but strong suspicions were entertained that some recent deaths had been owing to it. The difficulty of ascertaining its commencement in Mahometan countries would seem to be, from what we experienced, very great. The Mahometans, who esteem it impious to withdraw themselves from the danger of infection, look with an evil eye on the precautions which Christians take to that effect: nor will they readily tell, in suspected cases, of what disease a person died, lest they should seem accessory to such impiety. They take a pride in making comparisons between their resignation to the will of Heaven and the want of it manifested in the conduct of the infidel Christians. Christians, on the other hand, are unwilling to assert of rich Turks that they died of the plague, because they might give umbrage to families powerful enough to do them harm. Again, as all medical practitioners in Turkey refuse to visit the sick suspected of having the plague, no sure reports can be obtained from that quarter. Still, an attentive watchfulness from day to day over the diseases and deaths which occur, will leave little doubt on a person's mind, as may be judged from a perusal of the journal of occurrences during our residence at Latakia.

It was some time before Lady Hester could arrange herself to her liking in the house which she occupied; yet, had it been in thorough repair, no residence that had hitherto been allotted to her, excepting the palace

at Dayr el Kamar, was so good. The whole of the ground-floor consisted of vaulted apartments, which, for their warmth, are preferred by the natives during the winter months, and for their coolness during the summer. There was stabling for fifty horses: we at this time had nineteen. These rooms and offices surrounded a large, oblong court, two sides of which only were surmounted by a first story. On one of these there was breadth and length sufficient for a stuccoed court, surrounded by eight or ten rooms, with the doors and windows opening upon it. This upper story was the dwelling intended for the women, or the harým.

Mr. Barker had, at my request, hired me an Armenian servant at Aleppo, who arrived at Latakia on the 28th of May; and, my little establishment being now complete, I was careless whether we embarked for Europe or remained some time longer in this pleasant climate. The Armenians who live towards the Euphrates generally emigrate in their youth with a view to serve in the large cities. There they earn and lay by a little money, with which they return to their native villages. Carabit, the man whom Mr. B. had sent, was past fifty, and had been less economical or less lucky than his countrymen; for he was still, as he said, very poor, but he was an honest and serviceable old man.

During the two summers which I had passed in Turkey, I had suffered much from the heat during

the night: for, yet new to the country, I had listened to the advice of European residents, who described it as dangerous to expose one's-self to the night air. But I had found, when I could converse with the natives, and more especially with the Mahometans, that they were a people who lived more after the dictates of common sense, and were less slaves to theories and doctrines than Franks. Thus, for example, they take acid drinks and eat ripe fruits in fevers, because they find them beneficial and agreeable; they sleep in the open air, because, during great heats, the confinement of walls and of a roof is intolerable; they reject the use of fermented liquors, not only because their Koran forbids them, but because the refreshing sensation arising from a draught of cold water is not to be equalled, in hot climates, by the most delicious wines; they are slow in speech and action, because haste is no argument of judgment; in fact, they lead the lives of reasonable beings, and consequently appeared to me, in many respects, not unworthy of imitation. I accordingly henceforward suspended my musquito-net from four poles erected on the terrace of the house, and, like the natives, slept beneath it, under the canopy of heaven, the thermometer standing, at sunrise, at 71° F., and in the morning I caused cold water to be poured upon my shaved head (for all those who wear turbans are constrained to have the head shaved), thereby procuring for myself a most refreshing coolness, and preserving myself from catarrhal affections.

One evening, on opening the door of my chamber, I

found a serpent coiled up on the stone floor. I started back, and caught up a walking-stick, which lay in my room, in time to give him, as he was crawling up a perpendicular wall, a smart cut across the neck, which brought him to the ground, and a few more blows rendered him harmless. I took him up on the end of the stick, and, with a jerk, intended to throw him from the terrace into the street; but, from applying too much force, the serpent passed the street (not more than twelve feet wide) and fell on my neighbour's terrace, in the midst of a family party sitting there smoking. Their fright was ludicrous, until the serpent was observed to be nearly motionless, when, of course, tranquillity was restored, and the groundless terror created much laughter.

The town was seized with some alarm by the arrival of a ship from Tarsûs, which had thrown overboard seven bodies dead of the plague: she was not permitted to enter, and again put to sea. The Christians here, being tolerably rich, had influence enough to effect this, under the hope of excluding the disease at least for this year: but it was soon after known that the malady was now prevailing even within the walls; for a man, supposed to be ill of a fever only, avowed, on his recovery, that he had two plague-buboes actually suppurating; and, as he had been visited and touched by several of his friends, their consternation was very great.

It was not extraordinary that the plague should be

in the town, but only that its presence could have been for a moment doubted. Coasting craft were every day entering the harbour of Latakia from infected places, and fifteen persons had, at different times, been buried out of them. Some warehousemen had also died where goods had been lodged from them. Still the inhabitants flattered themselves that the infection was confined to the port: and, as all the Christians had shut up their counting-houses and suspended business, the little communication there was with the port lulled them for some time into a dangerous security.

A Damietta merchant, settled in Latakia, died on the 4th of June of the plague, having caught it, as it now was first ascertained, from his partner, who had died a few days before. I had reason to reflect with myself how much custom renders danger familiar. Two months before, whilst we were at Hamah, the mere report that the plague was so close to us as Damascus set all the house in a trepidation: but the subject, constantly talked over, by degrees lost its horrors. We could now hear of a neighbour's death even with tolerable indifference; and, in the evening of this day, the sudden attack of Mr. B.'s servant, with symptoms like those of the plague, frightened nobody very much. I saw him first at eight o'clock. His spirits were depressed, under the persuasion that he had caught the infection at the governor's house, whither he had accompanied his master on a visit.

He was removed to an airy cottage. Active remedies so far restored him by the evening of next day that I was not apprehensive for his safety, and he soon recovered.

June 8.—For the last three days there had been no deaths in the town.

It was impossible to account for the continued sickness which prevailed at Latakia during the greater part of the year, excepting on the grounds of an influence depending on the particular constitution of the atmosphere, unconnected with local circumstances; for Latakia has, from its situation, a claim to be styled a healthy place. There are no marshes, no stagnant pools, near; there is no extensive artificial irrigation of the soil to beget damps; neither is the town, nor are the environs, overhung by mountains or precipices to exclude the warmth of the sun or the free access of the winds. On the contrary, to the north and south is a dry and somewhat sandy wild, over which were scattered myrtle bushes and odoriferous herbs; to the east sloping mountains; to the west the sea. Yet, independent of all this, besides the deaths by plague, well ascertained, there were others from malignant fevers; and there were also many persons who fell sick and recovered. It will be seen that, before we quitted this place, not one escaped illness of all those with Lady Hester; and my inquiries led me to conclude, that there was or had

been, upon an average, one or two persons sick in every house throughout the place.

On the 9th of June, Giorgio, the dragoman, was attacked with pleurisy, which yielded to the common remedies.

Lady Hester was now becoming impatient to quit Latakia; and she was somewhat puzzled how to dispose of the many horses she had with her. As the first step towards my own preparations, I offered my two for sale: but, when it was understood that we were making ready for our departure, advantage was taken of that circumstance to bid a very low price, which I was necessitated to accept. I likewise dismissed Ibrahim, my groom, who, with Pierre, dismissed also, departed for Dayr-el-Kamar, the place where they had been hired, not quite a year before.

Although removed so far from the Bedouins, Lady Hester had not altogether lost sight of them. Indeed, whilst openly declaring her intention of going to Europe, she contradicted her assertion by endeavouring to establish a correspondence with Saûd, the chief of the Waĥabys, to whom, she told me about this time, she had written. Credulity, which seems ever to be the fault of lively imaginations, was hers; and the account given of the Wahabite chief, with his dromedaries that outstripped the fleetest horses, with his spacious palaces, his eight hundred wives, and his superb vestments, had entirely possessed her mind.

Sometimes she would plan a journey across the Desert to Derâyah, his capital; but what object her writing to him had I could not clearly understand.

Her supposed influence at Constantinople caused frequent applications to be made to her, to interfere on matters of dispute between the agents of our government and the officers of the Porte in the provinces.

July 12th was a holiday in the Greek calendar, and was celebrated by the inhabitants of that persuasion, according to annual custom, by bathing in the sea. There was a particular efficacy attached to this sea-bathing (at Latakia, at least) for the cure of sore eyes.

On the 19th of July, I was walking out of one of the gates of the town, about eight in the morning, when I came suddenly on a man who had been impaled an hour or two before, and was now dead, but still transfixed by the stake, which, as I saw on approaching him, came out about the sixth rib on the right side; but I was so shocked at this unexpected sight, that it was some minutes before I could recover myself sufficiently to go up to him. The stake was planted upright, seemed to be scarcely sharp, and was somewhat thicker than a hop-pole. I was told that it was forced up the body by repeated blows of a mallet, the malefactor having been bound on his face to a heavy pack-saddle, and an incision being made with a razor to facilitate the entrance of the stake. The body, yet alive, was set upright in a rude man-

ner; for the Turks preserve no decorum in executions: from pity for his sufferings, after being a short time in this position, he was shot. His shirt, which was afterwards set on fire, in burning singed the whole of his body black; and thus he was left for two days. His crime was said to be the stealing of a bullock and the murder of one of his pursuers. Jewish, Christian, Drûze, and Ansáry criminals are alone subjected to this horrible punishment: Turks are beheaded.[1]

I will now detail the other accidents of the plague which occurred up to this time, the beginning of August. On Thursday, June 9th, a lad had died; on the 17th, two Turks at the strand or port, and a child five years old. On the 21st, I was led to the house of a woman whose daughter, nine years old, had died in the morning. The mother had been ill six days. She was still on her legs, and came into the courtyard for me to see her; but she appeared more like a corpse than a living person, and her face was the picture of anxiety and despair. Among her other feelings, she was exceedingly sensible to the wind. There was a swelling under her left arm very visible. On the following day I saw her again. The swelling was enlarged, but caused no discolourment.

[1] I observe, in a recent publication, however, that an Egyptian pasha caused several Arabian chiefs at Sennāar to be impaled. These were Mahometans, and therefore my assertion is not quite correct.

I could have wished to administer some remedies to her, but her friends opposed it. I do not know whether I have mentioned a prejudice which the Christians of Syria have, that the linen which people have on when they fall ill should be worn until their convalescence. There is a still more pernicious custom prevalent among them, that of assembling at the houses of their friends or relations who are sick; considering, on these occsions, that condolence is more peculiarly a mark of affection. But the complaisance of the Christians is only shown where no danger is incurred; Turks exert it on all occasions; and, as at these visits they are officious in little services around the sick-bed, if the disorder be contagious, they cannot well escape it.

Before the 30th of the month, a Jew, two children, a black woman, and a Turk, had died infected.

By the end of July, all appearances of plague had ceased in the town; and the infection was supposed to be diminished in its force, because the mother and sisters of a young man, who had died about the 20th, and on whom they had attended, had not caught it.

The month of August was ushered in by quotidian and tertian agues, which prevailed very generally. Ophthalmia was also very common, but yielded to antiphlogistic treatment and common collyria.

It was on the 10th of August that news reached Lady Hester, by letter from Tripoli, of the death of

Mr. Cotter, one of two English gentlemen, who, shortly after landing in Syria from the Archipelago, had, with the other, Mr. Davison, been seized with a malignant fever at the monastery of Dayr Natûr, near Tripoli, which city they had been unable to enter, owing to the plague. Her ladyship hastened to offer an asylum to Mr. Davison, should he be disposed to avail himself of it; but it was said that he had departed for Jerusalem.

August 20.—Mr. Barker, the British consul at Aleppo, had resolved on spending part of the autumn with his family at Latakia; they arrived about this time, and their society was a great acquisition. There is a village on the first rise of the mountains to the north-east, called Besnáda, celebrated for the view which it affords, for its air, and for its water; there Mr. Barker fitted up a cottage, and, with the addition of a tent or two, found room enough for his large establishment.

A melancholy event occurred at the end of this month to a young Christian, who fell a victim to his indiscretion. He was the brother of Abdallah, katib of the Collector of the Customs, and ranking, from his situation, as one of the most respectable of the Christians. This gentleman, who was about twenty-five years old, and of a fair complexion (forming a strong contrast with the browner faces of his nation), was seen one morning to come out of the harým of a Turkish Effendi, just before sunrise. A Mussulman,

who suspected that he was carrying on an intrigue with a Turkish lady, had watched him, and, information being laid against him, he was seized and imprisoned. His imprisonment made a great noise; and Abdallah, fearing that his brother's life might be in danger, despatched a courier to Acre, to intercede for him with the pasha.

The Moslems will not easily pardon any man for an illicit intercourse with their women, but a Christian never. As there existed much hatred between the Motsellem and the Kumrukgi, the latter could obtain no mitigation of punishment by his intercessions.

The next morning, the prisoner was reported to have been cruelly bastinadoed: and the third morning he was said to have died. In fact, he was despatched hastily, lest the return of the courier should prevent the revenge which the Turks will ever take on Christians for an affront not to be wiped out but with their blood.

Various are the opinions entertained as to the effects of fruit on the human frame. The question is of too general a nature to make it necessary to apologize for inserting in this place the results of a fruit diet, persisted in from the 1st of July to the 20th, and renewed from the 4th of August to the 27th. In Syria, there is not a Christian or a Frank, who, in speaking of his own or his neighbour's maladies, does not ascribe them to fruit, either from its qualities, or from the time of day, or the season of the year, in which it was eaten.

At Damascus, this notion was carried so far by the Christians, as to attribute to fruit the numberless sore eyes that afflict the inhabitants. Not so the Turks: they eat fruit abundantly at all times, and give it unrestrictedly to their children and to their sick, as the most palatable and cooling diet, especially in fever.

Pringle and Tissot, two authors who recommend fruit in health and in sickness, had greatly weakened my belief in its supposed pernicious effects: and I was resolved to ascertain, on my own person, what the actual result might be in this hot climate. Accordingly, about the 1st of July, I entered upon a diet, almost entirely composed of fruit. I was enabled to adhere strictly to it; because, since our arrival at Latakia, I kept my own table, and was not, therefore, compelled, from the necessity of doing like others, and from deference to opinion and custom, to violate the rules I had laid down for myself; and the little communication which I had with the inhabitants of the place, owing to the danger of plague, prevented all interruption from invitations to the meals of other people.

It is to be premised that, although I consider the air of Latakia excellent, yet the constitution of the atmosphere this year was by no means healthy, and little favourable to dietetic experiments. The thermometer stood, upon an average at noon, at 84° F. This degree of heat rendered fruit highly agreeable. I slept during the night in the open air, with a mosquito net. I breakfasted on coffee and milk, with bread and honey.

At noon, I generally ate an entire sweet melon, and drank a pint of cold well-water, the place affording no other. My dinner invariably consisted of about a dozen fresh figs, a portion of a sweet, or water melon, and a pint of cold water. At ten o'clock at night, I again ate part of a sweet or water-melon, drank another pint of water, and retired to sleep.

This regimen was continued for twenty days. My digestion experienced no alteration whatever; my sleep was delicious; and, during the whole time, I knew not what it was to have a foul mouth in the morning, dreams in the night, or the slightest symptom of disorder in my health. The exercise that I took was, with the exception of swimming, a brisk trot on horseback of a mile or two every day.

The same diet was renewed from the 4th of August to the 27th, and on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th, I lived entirely on fruit and water, without even bread; grapes being added to what I have above enumerated.

I was walking one morning during Ramazán, which began this year on the 27th of August, to Mr. Barker's house, when I stopped in my way at the bazàr to buy something, and lighted my pipe, as I sat dealing with the merchant, to beguile the time. After making my purchase, I walked on with my long pipe in my hand, smoking as I went, which is not very genteel, even in Turkey, where few above the trading classes smoke, except when seated. A Christian of the country, who was with me, told me with great trepidation that the

Turks would not suffer me to smoke openly in the day time during Ramazán, and that I should get insulted if I continued to do so. He had scarcely said it (I sillily declaring that I would smoke if I chose) when I was addressed by several shopkeepers and people standing about, who called on their prophet to witness how the Ramazán was violated by a Nazarene. They told me to extinguish my pipe, and that if I were seen another time insulting their most sacred observances, they would break it about my head.[1] After much altercation, I walked on without extinguishing it; but my reflections afterwards told me I had done wrong, and I never, on any future occasion, wilfully opposed the minutest prejudice of their law.

During Ramazán, the Turks do not discontinue working: and in no religion with which I am acquainted are so many days in the year given to labour as in the Mahometan; for, if I may judge from what I heard in conversation, and from what I saw, they think that honest labour can have nothing unholy in it at any time, and they hold the same opinion as to innocent recreation. But, in the Greek church, the too frequent recurrence of holydays, and the strong

[1] It was remarkable that these words were said to me by a man who was so like me in person, that I once had been spoken to for him, even by the fanatic shaykh, who, finding his mistake, went away repeating "Istagfar Allah — deliver me, Lord:" *i. e.* forgive me for having given the selàm to a Christian instead of a Mussulman.

injunctions of the priests not to work on those days, is destructive of industry, and serves to render the mechanic and artisan drunken and idle.[1]

The month of September passed over without any material accident, excepting the sickness of almost all the servants, which gave me much anxiety: for no sooner did one or two get well than others fell ill. The prevailing maladies were bilious remittent, terminating in intermittent fevers.

Madame Lascaris, shut up in Damascus, in the midst of a raging plague, lost her young companion. The Greek patriarch, a worthy prelate, known to almost all English travellers in this country, likewise fell a victim to it.

As Lady Hester had declared her intention of embarking here, I had disposed of my horses, as I have already related. About this time, the glanders appeared among hers, and carried off two in a short time: a third was led to the seashore and shot, which action was greatly blamed by the lower order of Turks: a fourth was made over to the town farrier, and died; and the disease bade fair to exterminate the whole stud.

In the mean time, amusements were not wanting to make the time pass very agreeably. To the north of Latakia is a bay formed by the receding of the land. Here vessels destined for Latakia can ride out severe gales from the south-west, the point from which they generally blow. Upon the shore of this bay stood a

[1] Vide Gibbon, vol. x., p. 103, 8vo.

mosque and sanctuary, built over the tomb of a santon. The place is called Ebn Hani,[1] and Mr. Barker and his family used occasionally to go and spend three or four days there, at which times a ride by land, or a trip by sea, to visit them, was one source of recreation. In like manner, there was at all times wild boar hunting: with francolins, partridges, gazelles, and hares, to shoot at, as well as that delicious bird, the beccafico, when figs were in season. I never saw a place where a sportsman might have more diversion.

When we went to shoot beccaficos, the party separated in the gardens, about a mile from the town, and met at a given place, at eleven or twelve, to breakfast on what had been killed. It was on one of these occasions that we were sitting after this breakfast, (or dinner, as it is called there,) upon the brink of a garden-reservoir, into which, by a creaking Persian wheel, water was thrown from a well beneath; when, on observing a stramonium shrub close by, Mr. Barker remarked how amusing were the effects produced by putting the seeds of it into the pipe of a person smoking, whom it intoxicated, and caused to play various antics. A French gentleman, M. Narsiat, was of the party, and expressed a wish to observe these effects on some person: accordingly, a peasant, who, among others, had been looking on at our repast in the open air, was offered a sum of money if he would suffer himself to be made intoxicated; but he was not to receive it until

[1] Ebn Hani is probably the site of the ancient Heraclia.

such an effect had manifested itself. The fellow inquired what that effect would be, and it was described to him. He then allowed the quantity of seeds supposed necessary to be put, fresh from the plant, into his pipe, and began to smoke. Whether it was his knavery which made him sham the symptoms, or whether they were real, I cannot say; but he beat and knocked about some of his comrades, and then leaped into the reservoir of water: after which he came, in a perfectly sensible manner, up to us, and demanded the money.

Some of these peasants kept falcons for hawking, and would, for a trifle, go out and kill a partridge or two.

At the beginning of October, Mr. B. received letters which obliged him to return immediately to England. He, therefore, reluctantly prepared to quit a lady, in whose society he had so long travelled, and from whose conversation and experience of the world so much useful knowledge was to be acquired. He departed on the 7th of October for Aleppo, accompanied by his dragoman, M. Beaudin, with a cook, valet, and groom. I accompanied him a league or two on his road, and then returned to Latakia.

Lady Hester had now abandoned the idea of going to Europe. Sometimes she thought of taking a journey overland to Bussora, and to embark there in an English ship for India, but finally determined on remaining some months longer in Syria. She told me that she had

bethought herself of a small retired building, a short distance from Sayda, which, as being only an occasional residence of the proprietor, the patriarch of the Greek catholics, could, for a trifling sum, be hired for her use. She had seen this when at Sayda the preceding year, and she now wrote to M. Bertrand, desiring him to secure it for her.[1] The patriarch Athanasius was at this time residing at the monastery of Mar Elias, so his house was called; but, on learning Lady Hester's wishes, he sent a polite message to signify that she was welcome to occupy it whenever and as long as she chose.

Soon after the arrival of the answer, all the luggage that could be well spared was shipped off for Sayda under the care of Hanah, or as he was usually called Giovanni, formerly Mr. B.'s servant, but now returned from Aleppo and become mine. It was intended that we should follow in the course of a few days: when a series of melancholy events succeeded each other so rapidly, that the new year had begun before we departed!

Two young children of Mr. Barker's, named Harissa and Zabetta, were taken ill of a malignant fever. I attended them, and, observing the symptoms to be highly virulent, I insisted on separating the parents from them. Mr. and Mrs. Barker in consequence

[1] One motive for going to Sayda was to prosecute a search for hidden treasures at Sayda and Ascalon, of which an account will be given in its proper place.

left Besnáda for Latakia, and the sole care of nursing the little patients devolved on their grandmother, Mrs. Abbott. On the 31st both died within five hours of each other. Shortly before this the janissary in attendance on Lady Hester had been taken off very suddenly, and also the child of a merchant, the partner of Mâlem Mûsa Elias, the British agent: so that there was some doubt whether the plague had not again got footing in the town. We were aware that it still raged with unabated violence in Hems, Damascus, and at a village near Antioch, not very far from Latakia, and through which places caravans were continually coming to Latakia. The summer and autumn were considered by the natives as peculiarly fine: for the weather had remained so settled that, for five months, there had been only two showers of rain.

On the 15th of November, just as we were on the point of setting out for Sayda, Lady Hester was attacked with a fever, and on the evening of the same day I fell ill also.[1]

I continued to get out for an hour or two in the course of the day, till the 18th; but my debility had then become so great, and the symptoms of low fever

[1] We had been out shooting francolins two days before, and, after being much heated with walking, I had seated myself on the edge of the river to wait for Mr. Barker, whom I saw coming up. I there received a check of perspiration, to which I attributed my illness.

so aggravated, that I took to my bed, where I became occasionally delirious ; and it was not until the twelfth day that I was able to quit my chamber, when I was carried to attend on Lady Hester, whose situation was so dangerous, that, in addition to a French doctor, who happened to come to Latakia at this time, an Italian surgeon, settled in the place, had also been called in. But Mr. Barker urged the necessity of my seeing her, although I much feared that my weak state would wholly incapacitate me from yet resuming my professional duties. For fifteen days after this I did not quit her day or night, never undressing the whole of that time : and, during this period, for twelve hours, I despaired of her life, and a communication was made to her by Mr. Barker to that effect. At last it pleased God, by the aid of a constitution naturally vigorous, to relieve her so far that I could pronounce her out of danger ; nevertheless she was not able to stand till the 1st of January, the day of our departure from Latakia.

It was Lady Hester's firm persuasion that her disorder was the plague, and some reasons induced me to believe so. For if there be (as the native physicians say) a sporadic disease constantly remarked at the beginning and close of the first year in which plague appears, but which, alike in most of its symptoms, loses for a time its infectious powers, and is not equally disposed to affect the glandular system, then had Lady Hester indeed the plague. Besides, on the 15th of

November, four persons had died; on the 16th three: and there might have been as many deaths on the subsequent days for aught I know: which are so many proofs of the occasional reappearance of a modified disease, dependent on the peculiar constitution of the year.

In consequence of this grievous sickness which befel Lady Hester and myself, as well as of the many melancholy events that we had witnessed here, we became so disgusted with Latakia as to feel very anxious to leave the place. We had experienced great inconvenience from the want of many articles of comfort which had been sent off to Sayda with the luggage: and hence it was that our privations were of a rather serious kind. The weather, which had remained tolerably warm up to December 10th, on a sudden became windy, boisterous, and exceedingly wet; so that it was necessary to hire and borrow bed-coverings: and, as the house happened not to be weather-proof, Lady Hester's chamber was often inundated, and a cope of felt was suspended beneath the ceiling to carry off the water: nay, it will hardly be believed that, in mine, I was occasionally obliged to rise two or three times to shift my bed from place to place, in the ineffectual attempt to find a dry corner.

Captain Macdonald,[1] a gentleman in the service of the East India Company, arrived at Latakia a day or two after the commencement of Lady Hester's illness.

[1] This gentleman afterwards changed his name to Kinneir, and is author of a volume of travels in Asia.

He remained in Mr. Barker's house until the departure of that gentleman and his family (December the 5th) for Aleppo, and his presence was a pleasing addition to our small society. Invited by M. Guys, the French consul, he afterwards took up his abode with him for a few days; until, on the 10th of December, he sailed, on a most tempestuous night, and, in an open boat, for Cyprus; but the boat could not keep the sea, and returned on the 12th. A day or two afterwards he finally succeeded in getting across; but not without considerable risk.

To add to the serious inconveniencies under which Lady Hester laboured, her maid, Mrs. Fry, fell ill of a nervous fever, brought on by unremitting attendance on her mistress and excessive fatigue. There were, it is true, at this period, as servants in the house, two women of the place, both useful in their way, if Lady Hester had but been able to speak to them: one an old woman, called Hadjy (for she had been to Jerusalem,) who proved an excellent nurse; and the other, named Mariam, a young and handsome creature, who officiated as bathwoman and laundress. Mariam was a widow, and had two daughters, twelve and fourteen years old, who for loveliness might have vied with the two beauties of Athens, so much spoken of by Lord Byron and travellers: but all three had been attacked with bilious remittent fevers, and required, rather than rendered, assistance in the family.

Mr. Pearce, of whom mention has been made in

[1] *Hadj*, a pilgrim; *hadjy*, feminine.

the former part of this Journal, had now, after a complete ramble through Syria, reached Aleppo. Hearing of Lady Hester's illness, he politely wrote to offer her whatever assistance he could render to her, requesting that she would command his services, even at Latakia, if necessary.

December 15th, Lady Hester was seized with an ague, just at the time that she had regained strength enough to meditate anew her departure for Sayda, and when a vessel had been hired for the purpose. The voyage was of course deferred for some time longer. To add to the sufferings we had within doors, it was discovered, as winter advanced, that provisions were very scanty at Latakia, and that there was by no means the variety which is met with in the European markets. Beef and veal were never on sale—mutton rarely: goats' flesh, which the majority of the inhabitants lived on, we could not fancy. Geese, turkeys, and ducks, were only to be had by sending to Cyprus: fowls were poor. Game, as has been observed, was plentiful; but to have it at table it was necessary to be a sportsman, or to have a neighbour like Mr. Barker, whose skill in shooting was remarkable: for the Turks seldom indulge in the sports of the field, and the Christians dare not carry firearms. Fresh butter was rare, and, when obtained, generally liquid, looking like melted hogs' lard; so that we were almost deprived of all the dishes, and they are not a few, in which that article is introduced.

As our voyage was again deferred, M. Beaudin, the interpreter, who had remained some time at Tripoli, in expectation of Lady Hester's arrival on her way to Sayda, was now recalled. He had joined us only a few days, when, one morning, he was suddenly attacked with symptoms of an inflammatory fever, and, in bleeding, he was seized with strong convulsions, which threw the house anew into disorder. He shortly afterwards recovered, but his convalescence was slow, and, when we departed for Sayda, he was sent by land by short journeys.

At length, on the 6th of January, 1814, Lady Hester was with difficulty placed on an ass, and, supported on either side by Stefano and Pierre, who had been recalled, she was conveyed to the water-side. As she had not been out of doors before for forty-eight days, a vast crowd collected to see her, and we were much annoyed by a buffoon, who, to gain money, played on a squeaking pipe, and danced before her on the way to the harbour. When assured that he would not be rewarded for the trouble he was giving himself, he went away. At the quay the secretary of the governor waited to see us on board. Presents were distributed to all such as had experienced trouble on Lady Hester's account, or rendered services to her, and we quitted the place with the good wishes of the greater part of the inhabitants.

We embarked on board a shaktûr, a lateen-sailed, decked vessel like a lugger, very roomy and commo-

dious. The vessel had been previously fitted up for our reception, and, by means of mats and boards, the whole of the hold was set apart for the occupation of Lady Hester and her three women. These vessels have but small cabins, where a person can creep out of the wet and sleep. I preferred sleeping on deck; and the weather was fortunately so mild, although it was the month of January, that I experienced no inconvenience from it; nay, at noon the sun was even troublesome.

We could observe, from the sea, that the mountains running from Gebel-el-Akerah, the ancient Cassius,[1] behind Latakia, are continued, in an even ridge, to where Mount Lebanon begins, at the back of Tripoli. They were covered with snow at this season of the year. We sailed along with a leading north wind, and passed, in our way, Gebala, twelve miles from Latakia, and Tortûsa, a small town, with a creek which serves to admit boats only. Opposite to it, at about the distance of a league, is the island of Aradus, now called Arad, a rock about a league in circumference, covered completely with houses. It has a well and cisterns for rain water. Most of the inhabitants lived by sailmaking, and there was no other place in Syria, we were told, where sail-cloth was manufactured. Their insulated and barren situation exempted them in a great measure from the visits of the Turks,

[1] Mount Cassius, near to Seleucia.—Str. l. xvi.

a circumstance that proved favourable to their prosperity.

We put into Tripoli (Tarablus), and passed one night there, but did not go on shore. The road, for it is not a harbour, is formed by six or eight rocks, just above the water, which break the impetuosity of the sea: but it is by no means a safe haven.

Mount Lebanon begins a few miles to the north of Tripoli, to appearance in a gradual ascent, and arrives to its greatest height behind the town. It is there only, throughout its whole length, that the snow remains all the year. Two small mountains, standing separate, are interposed between the sea and the great chain. One is called Gebel Tarbal, the other El Kûry: and this latter produces some of the best tobacco in Syria. Handsome presents, in provisions, were sent off to Lady Hester, by the governor of Tripoli, Mustafa Aga Berber, and also by the English agent, Signor Catsiflitz, a Greek. Among them were baskets of Tripoli oranges, which are deservedly held in high esteem.

But it is not too much to assert that the heaviest tax on travellers of note in the East consists in the presents which they receive. It appears at first sight extremely hospitable to welcome the arrival of a stranger, by anticipating all his wants, and by sending him provisions of immediate necessity; and so it would be, were it not that those who deliver these presents beg for, or insinuate that they expect in return, as

much or more than their value; whilst the giver can scarcely be forgotten on such occasions, if the stranger would not appear ungrateful.

We arrived at Sayda on the 11th, just in time to escape a storm, which came on in the evening of our landing; indeed, the swell of the sea had announced it some time before: and as the vessel rolled greatly in Sayda harbour, before we could prepare the things necessary for Lady Hester's landing, she began to grow fearful, sickness having bent that courage which I had never yet seen yield to the commotions of the elements or to anything else.

At length an ass was brought to the water-edge; her ladyship landed in the same way that she had embarked. Signor Damiani, a person who had been employed by the English during Sir Sydney Smith's expedition to Acre, let his house for our occupation, in consideration of a present to be left at her discretion; for, although the same French consul lived here that had lodged us in the year 1812, and this was the same Damiani who had then in vain solicited that honour, still Lady Hester considered she should enjoy more liberty in a hired house of her own than in that of another, only lent to her.

Before dismissing the subject of this voyage, it will not be amiss to note the remarks which we made concerning the crew. On their knowledge of navigation I cannot decide, knowing little of the matter myself; but they appear to be practical, although not

theoretical, sailors. Nothing can exceed their activity in going aloft; although they pay little attention to nicety in trimming their sails and yards, and have no discipline. As to the vessel, her rigging was defective, her decks dirty. The crew lived well enough, on rice, cheese, onions, and good biscuit; with sometimes the addition of figs, raisins, &c.

How far animal food is necessary for the support of seamen, persons more experienced in these things must decide. But if an humble opinion may be ventured, I profess I cannot see why salt meat, juiceless, and saturated with brine even to loathing, should be made the main nourishment of a crew on a long voyage, to the great injury of their health, when farinaceous food of all sorts is so plentiful and so salutary, which would form, with the addition of dry fruits, and the many other articles now allowed in his Majesty's navy, a species of sustenance much better adapted to long voyages, and diminishing not a jot the strength of a man, as is generally supposed. For whence is it that the Egyptian, so lusty and muscular, derives his great strength, but from rice and cold water; or the Irishman, but from potatoes and buttermilk? Oh! that this truth could be forcibly impressed on those persons who fancy that strength lies only in animal food, and in spirits, wine, and beer; for let them be assured that all fermented liquors are destructive of it.

In this trip I learned to box the compass in Arabic, which is less difficult than in English. The card is

divided into sixteen rhumbs, not as with us into thirty-two; and the alternate rhumbs have no names, but are indifferently called joze or halves, with the addition of the point next adjoining. Thus it must necessarily be wanting in accuracy to designate the wind and the course.

CHAPTER X.

Mode of Life of Lady Hester Stanhope—Imaginary treasures of Gezzàr Pasha—Road to the Convent of Mar Elias—Description of the Convent—Village of Abra—Interior of a cottage—Poverty of the people—Change in the character of Lady Hester—Abra purchased by a Greek Patriarch—Revenues—Tenure of land—Occupations of the peasantry—Herdsmen—Village overseer—Notions of propriety in the behaviour of females — Dread of the plague — Precautions against the infection suggested by Lady Hester to the Emir Beshýr — Visit of the Shaykh Beshýr to Abra—Good breeding of the Turks — Greek monasteries — The patriarch Macarius — M. Boutin—Hanýfy, a female slave sent to Lady Hester—Specification of her qualities — Discovery of an ancient sepulchre —Paintings in it copied by Mr. Bankes, and by the Author—Various forms of sepulchres.

We are now arrived at a new period in Lady Hester's peregrinations, in which, from a traveller, she becomes a sojourner in a strange land ; and, aban-

doning Europe and its customs altogether, conforms herself entirely to the modes of life of the Orientals. Not that it is clear whether she was fixed in such a determination at first; but, unwilling to return to England, with which country she had become, for several reasons, disgusted, and, finding no other on the Continent sufficiently quiet to insure a permanent asylum, she thought she would remain some time longer in Syria, where, looking down on the world from the top of Mount Lebanon, she might calmly contemplate its follies and vicissitudes, neither mixed up with the one, nor harassed by the other.

The state of retirement in which we now lived gave me time to turn my attention more particularly to a consideration of the geographical conformation of the country. A traveller, newly arrived in Syria, or passing hastily through it, will find much difficulty in doing this: for, although there are many prominent features to guide him, he will necessarily have few books, and perhaps only a bad map or two to refer to;[1] and he will sometimes seek in vain for the divisions of provinces, for the precise termination of mountains, for

[1] Of all the maps of Syria which I have yet seen, that of d'Anville, or more particularly that portion of it which he calls the map of Phœnicia, is the one chiefly to be relied on. Recent maps have generally been drawn up, with supposed corrections after late travellers; d'Anville seems to have drawn up his from a comparison of both modern and ancient authorities, and no subsequent geographer has equalled him.

the course of rivers occasionally dried up, or for the sites of cities now overgrown with grass, which are placed on paper so distinctly; besides which his inquiries will always be impeded or stopped by the ignorance of those through or to whom he is necessarily obliged to direct them.

A general notion of Syria can be obtained from no author better than from Abulfeda, an impartial writer, dwelling in it, and distinguished for his knowledge on the subject. His words are, " Syria is a magnificent country, rich in its productions, blessed with fertility, adorned with gardens, woods, meadows, valleys, and mountains, watered by rivers, abundant in vegetables, game, flocks, and domestic animals. It is seasonably refreshed and fertilized by annual rains, and bears on its mountains perpetual snows."

Strabo divides Syria into four provinces—Seleucia, Phœnicia, Palestine (subdivided into Galilee, Samaria, and Judea), and Cœle-Syria. Cœle-Syria was either Proper, or Common. Proper Cœle-Syria seems (for there is some confusion in the account) to have comprehended those extensive vales, embosomed between Mount Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, and the best demarcation of which is by following the course of the river Leontes, or the modern Casmya, up between the modern provinces of Shkyf and Bsharra, and the valley of the Bkâ, and by continuing on with the course of the Orontes down to Antioch; then the country to the right and left of these two rivers included between the mountains

will be Cœle-Syria Proper. Common Cœle-Syria consisted of the plains spreading out towards Hems and Hamah to the north, and towards Damascus to the south, cut off from the sea-coast by the intervention of great mountains: whilst that slip of land between the mountains and sea-coast, running the whole length of Syria, from Antioch down to the river Eleutherus, or the modern Nahr el Kebyr,[1] is Seleucia; Phœnicia, thence to the Promontorium Album, or modern Ras el Nakûra; and Palestine from the Nakûra, down to the sandy Desert, which divides it from Egypt: or by another division, Strabo makes Phœnicia to extend from the river Eleutherus down to Damietta, and Palestine to be a district of it.

It was also probable that there was another motive which induced Lady Hester to delay yet awhile her departure. Among the many stories which were related of the celebrated Pasha el Gezzàr, one was, that he had amassed immense wealth, and, having in his lifetime hid it under ground, had disappointed the Porte at his death in the acquisition of it. She was possessed with the idea that she had obtained a clue to the discovery of some of his treasures, and she had applied to the Turkish government (as it was afterwards known) for permission to dig for them. This I conceive to have been one main reason for her stay.

In the mean time, as for myself, my thoughts would

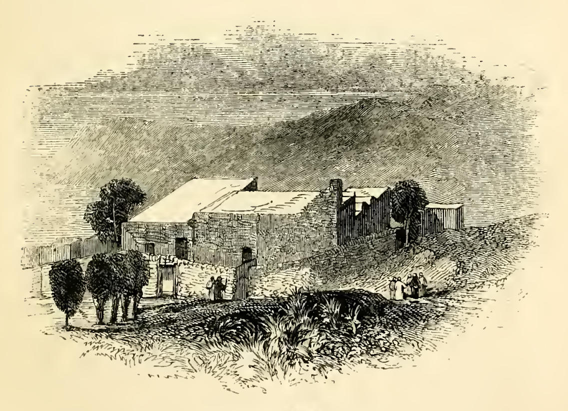
[1] There is another Nahr el Kebýr close to Laodicea, which must not be mistaken for this, situated a little to the north of Tripoli.

often involuntarily turn towards England, and then the prospect of a long residence in the Levant somewhat disquieted me. But I banished these anticipations; determined that no trivial cause should make me leave her ladyship alone and unprotected in so distant a country. Not that my presence could add materially to her safety; for there never was a person who relied more on his own resources than she did; besides, gloomy reflections could take no hold of an individual in this fine climate; for they were forgotten as soon as he emerged from the house into the air, where the inspiration of the balmy atmosphere and the scenes which surrounded him always begat cheerful sensations.

The day after our arrival at Sayda, I rode up to the monastery, in which we were to reside. I had never seen it before, not having been with Lady Hester and Mr. B. when the French consul had led them to it, during their former visit to Sayda. On quitting the city gate, we passed through several hedged lanes, between orchards and gardens filled with trees which shrink from the cold blasts of northern climates. Oranges were as thick on the branches as apples are accustomed to grow; and the broad leaf of the banana tree, which flourishes in great vigour hereabout, was an object singularly striking. The hedges were in most places rendered almost impenetrable by the prickly leaf of the cactus indicus.

At the distance of half a mile we came to the skirts of the gardens, at the foot of Mount Lebanon. It was not very steep, and about a quarter of a mile

brought us to the top of the first hill, where we looked down before us into a deep valley; then, carrying our eyes up on the opposite mountain, we descried a low building, which I was told was the monastery. The descent was rugged, but the asses are accustomed to mountains. The soil was bare, rocky, and apparently sterile; and here and there an olive or a fig-tree was the only thing which it seemed capable of nourishing. In ascending on the opposite side, the path, over a loamy soil, was so slippery from recent rains, that I dismounted and walked up, as the ass could not make good his footing.



CONVENT OF MAR ELIAS.

On arriving at the monastery, I found it to be a quadrangular stone building, of one story, with flat

roofs or terraces, according to the custom of the country, enclosing a small square paved court, which had a little mould in the centre, with a few flowers, and two small orange trees. The rooms were as neat as whitewashed walls could make them, but without chairs or tables; and in one or two was a long sofa bench of solid masonry against the wall on one side only. There was a small chapel attached to the south-east corner, with an altar in it. A discolouration in one of the walls, in which a staircase ran up to the roof, led me to inquire what it was; when the servant told me that the late patriarch was buried there, seated in an arm-chair. Although his body was said to have been embalmed, it smelt most offensively; and I anticipated that this unusual burial would give rise to many ghost-stories. This chapel is dedicated to St. Elias, whose name the building bears, being called Dayr Mar Elias, or the Monastery of St. Elias, although I could not learn that, within the memory of any one, it had served for anything but the residence of the patriarch of the Greek schismatics, or of the bishop of Sayda: nor were the rooms in any respect adapted for the cells of friars.

The situation is picturesque, but lonely and barren, on the top of a mountain without verdure, surrounded on every side with mountains equally sterile; excepting a few olive and mulberry trees on a shelving bank at the back of the building, which were not to

be come at but by a circuitous path, or by leaping down a perpendicular rock of twenty feet. Though now on Mount Lebanon, where the imagination of the reader will supply him with umbrageous cedars at every step, fiction alone could throw their shade over Dayr Mar Elias. From its elevated situation, the monastery commands a most extensive view of the sea, from which it is distant in a straight line about two miles. But the sea, on the Syrian coast, is only a vast waste, where small craft are seen coasting before the wind, and now and then a three-masted vessel in the distance. The magnificent spectacle of a passing fleet, so common in the British Channel, is here unknown.

I found that, during the late rains, the roofs had leaked, and some of our baggage had been damaged. This was an unpromising prospect for the new residence ; and several repairs, which were absolutely requisite to render the rooms habitable, must necessarily retard Lady Hester's removal from Sayda some weeks. The four sides of the quadrangle were not equally commodious. On the west were three good rooms, convertible into saloons or bed-rooms ; so that one as a drawing-room, one as her ladyship's bed-room, and one for her maid, occupied the whole of that side. The north side was made up of a kitchen, a kelár or store-room, and a corner room, in which the patriarch had died. The east side had three small rooms, and an oil and wine cellar ; and, as it had already been de-

cided that two of these were to be converted into a vapour bath, the dwelling became reduced to five rooms. This confined space rendered it necessary for me to look out for a cottage for myself in the village, which was a quarter of a mile off, on somewhat higher ground than the monastery: I therefore rode to it. Its name is Abrah, or Abra. I little thought, on first beholding it, that I was destined to spend there nearly three years of my life.

Abra consisted of forty cottages, each of one story, and of the rudest construction. The cement for the unhewn stones, of which they were built, was mud from the road. Rough trunks of poplars or other slight trees formed the beams for the roofs, which were flat, and made in the following manner. Over the trunks were laid rough stakes for rafters, over these brushwood, and the coating was common loam, rolled and trodden down, until it resisted in some degree the passage of wet: but there were few roofs that appeared to be waterproof. Within, the walls were covered with a rough plaster of mould and water without lime, and this was whitewashed.

I entered the best cottage in the village. It consisted of a single room. One end of it was occupied by two cows and an ass, the other end, somewhat raised, by the family. The floor was of yellow clay, beaten down to hardness. In the middle of the room was a small plaster fireplace, about the size of a chafing-dish; the door and windows served for

chimneys. Three or four unbaked earthen jars, as big as tubs, stood in a corner to contain wheat, barley, rice, figs, &c.; a jar for water; a spinning-wheel; a wheel for winding off cotton; a couple of copper saucepans; a hand-mill, to grind corn; with a mat spread on the ground to sit on, formed the furniture and utensils of the family, which consisted of a stout man, a pretty woman, her mother with two children, and the grandmother.



INTERIOR OF A SYRIAN COTTAGE: WOMEN GRINDING CORN.

The walls of the rooms had holes through them, high up, to let in the air; and, on a level with the waist, were small recesses which served for putting away a dish, a saucepan, or a drinking jug. Cupboards there were none; one chest alone seemed to be sacred from the

examination of any one. There was a bed rolled up, but I discovered afterwards that the peasantry very seldom had more than a cotton quilted coverlet, sleeping in their clothes. Few have a change of their outward dress, although I had occasion afterwards to observe that they were more particular than English peasants in changing the linen next their skin.

The inhabitants of Abra were Greek Catholics. The village perhaps is more pleasantly situate than the monastery. It had several plantations of mulberry trees for silkworms, and of fig-trees. It is in the division called Aklým-el-Tafâh, in the district of Gebâa, where one Ali Aga resided at this time, as motsellem or governor. Though close to the coast, and belonging, as a part of Ali Aga's district, to the pashalik of Acre, the peasants rather clung to the Emir of the Drûzes.

The patriarch owned two-thirds of the village. The villagers seemed very poor. They had not even coffee to offer, which I never yet had found wanting anywhere. Tobacco, from an old pipe and a still older bag, seemed their only indulgence. When I told the owner of the cottage that I was under the necessity of turning him out of his home, he said he was willing to comply, if I would bring him an order from the patriarch, his master, to that effect, and that he would soon build himself another.

As I returned to Sayda, in descending the steep hill close under the monastery or dayr, I observed a

spring of clear water, running from a stone lip in a stream not larger than my thumb; and this, I was told, supplied the village and monastery. Close by was a cave, formerly a sepulchre, as the recesses in the bottom and sides, still visible, denoted. In it were several naked female peasants, who were washing themselves with water from the spring. Though the path was within forty yards of them, they did nothing but turn their backs, and squat on their haunches until I had passed by.

The masons were sent up to Mar Elias, and the repairs were begun immediately: but it was the middle of February before the house was ready for Lady Hester's reception; the building of a bath having more especially occupied a great deal of time. Masons, carpenters, and workmen of that class in these countries give infinitely more trouble than they do in England. There it is necessary for their employer himself to purchase every article they stand in need of. The mason, for example, says he wants so much lime, so much powdered pottery, so many tiles, &c.; all these are to be sought out and bargained for by the employer. The mason, indeed, would take the trouble off your hands, but he requires money in advance, and cheats besides.

Lady Hester was but indifferently lodged in the French caravansery, where Damiani's house was. Her spirits seemed lately to have been somewhat depressed by her protracted illnesses. She had a relapse of her

ague, and was again confined to her room. To increase her sufferings, her maid Mrs. Fry was attacked with a most violent dysentery, which threatened her life: she, however, recovered slowly under my hands. All communication with the French consul was dropped, as also with every person in Sayda. Just at this time, M. Beaudin was attacked with a paralytic affection, which deprived him of the use of his limbs and speech. My troubles were now at their height. However, by the end of January, Lady Hester felt strength enough to ride out into the gardens; and never shall I forget this, as it were, her new return to life. From that time her character changed deeply. She became simple in her habits, almost to cynicism. She showed, in her actions and her conversation, a mind severe indeed, but powerfully vigorous. Scanning men and things with a wonderful intelligence, she commented upon them as if the motives of human actions were open to her inspection. Sometimes she looked into futurity like the sybil of old; and, as she reasoned on the great changes which were taking place in Europe, she scattered her prophetic leaves, which, as subsequent events have shown, may almost be supposed to be the effect of inspiration.[1]

[1] For the truth of this, I appeal to those letters written by her to Mr. Coutts, the banker, at this period; to his grace the late Duke of Buckingham; to the Honourable General R. Grenville; and to others.

I endeavoured to collect such information respecting the taxes and revenue of the village of Abra as might illustrate the general nature of property in Mount Lebanon. It was not so easy to do this as might at first be imagined: for the peasants and more particularly the bailiff of the village (or Kûly, as he is called in Arabic) fancied that Lady Hester had an intention of purchasing it of the patriarch. And, as the thing was desirable for them, on account of the increased opportunities which must necessarily occur for cheating, they were apt to answer my inquiries as best suited their purpose of inducing her to buy. The population amounted to about forty families, most of them descendants of peasants who had for generations inhabited the same spot. The man who for twenty years only had been settled in the village was still looked on, when disputes called forth the expression of any spiteful remarks, as an alien. I have heard a woman, with scarcely a rag on her back, when quarrelling with another, cite the respectability of her descent from ancestors established time immemorial in Abra.

The village of Abra was bought by a patriarch of the Greek Catholics, not many years before our arrival in Syria, from a Drûze family, whose property it was. As far as I could gather, it cost him eighteen purses, £450 sterling. I could not learn its extent in acres; but the whole of the land belonging to it produced eighteen gararas of

corn, a garara being equal to seventy-two mids, each mid equal to a gallon or thereabouts.

Abra, being a limitrope village, bordering on the Metûaly district to the south, on the Drûze district to the east and north, and on the parish of Sayda to the west, seemed to share in the vexations of all three governments. To the motsellem of Gebâa it paid two hundred and forty-five piasters a year, which was the miri of the land: to the Emir Beshyr two hundred piasters a-year, the miri of the houses: to the governor of Sayda one hundred and fifty piasters a-year. These sums were collected by the kûly or shaykh at stated periods, and delivered to the persons respectively claiming them.

The patriarch received, as yearly rent of the houses, from five to ten piasters each. Thus, when I threw two cottages into one, I paid for two as though not consolidated. The tenant made all repairs, excepting when the main beam of the ceiling broke, which was supplied by the proprietor.

The proprietor received of whatever grew from the leaf a half: as, of tobacco, figs, oil, mulberry leaves for feeding silkworms (which last two were commuted for a certain portion of the products, viz., silk and oil) and a quarter of all kinds of corn. Besides these certain receipts, he had incidental ones on particular occasions, and certain perquisites: all which may be put down as follows:

	piasters.
Corn, eight gararas, ...	800
Each time the patriarch had a festival, as at Easter and Christmas, the peasants presented him with eggs and fowls, valued at	40
Work done for the patriarch by the peasants gratis always on Sundays	50
Green corn or other pasture allowed him for his cattle	15
Oil, one quintal (worth three hundred piasters) half the produce	150
Tobacco	100
Silk, five rotolos from the leaves growing in the village, and eight rotolos from leaves bought in the gardens of Sayda, at eighty piasters the rotolo, makes one thousand and forty piasters —half of which is	520
Rent for houses, forty one families at seven and a half piasters each house, ...	300
	1975

The patriarch therefore had here a gain of thirteen hundred and eighty-nine piasters, or about £68 per annum. There were of course other sources of gain, with which I was not acquainted, and I may have even underrated the different products which I have enumerated.

I could never clearly understand the nature of the tenure of the land and other property. Thus the patriarch was the proprietor of the houses and could build or pull them down, or eject a tenant from them, when he liked. All trees, not bearing fruit, seemed

to be his : for, whenever the peasants were in want of a rafter or joist, it was necessary to apply to the kûly for permission to cut. Yet, in those bearing fruit, as olive or mulberry trees, the peasants had a right of possession, and of transmission to their children ; of which I saw repeated examples. With regard to the soil, that, too, was not the patriarch's ; for each family would speak of certain pieces of land as belonging to them. Still it was odd that, when Lady Hester wanted a field any where for sowing or for any other use, it was always given to her, let her have cast her eye on what piece she would. I concluded therefore that the purchaser of a village became the proprietor of the tithe, rather than the possessor of the soil, which was partitioned into smaller or greater farms or estates, as prosperity and adversity appropriated or alienated it, by purchase or sale, from man to man. [1]

A small village like Abra, away from any high road, was seldom visited by strangers. Occasionally, a pedlar selling soap, kadâmy, or parched peas, and a little halàwy or sweetmeat, would pass through, crying his wares: for the purchase of which he would receive money, or, in default of it, eggs, or chickens, which he resold, in the towns, to advantage. Some-

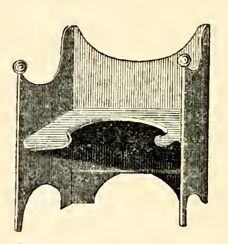
[1] Upon some occasions, where land was newly appropriated for tillage, it was customary for the peasants to draw lots for particular parcels, these having been first staked out by the head men of the village.

times a pauper, after begging from house to house, would sleep through the night in the village tanûr or oven, a favourite lodging both in towns and villages for the wretched. [1]

The life which these peasants lead is simple enough. At sunrise the husband goes to his field to plough, or sow, or reap, or plant his tobacco, or to cut leaves for his silkworms. The women wash, bake, grind at the handmill, feed the silkworms, gather the figs, the olives, and, if *fathy*, as they call it, or having nothing to do, they spin. Were I desired to describe a peasant woman in her most customary occupation, I should represent her as seated at the door of her cottage, spinning with a hand-spindle, and having a long cane lying by her side to drive away the chickens, which she talks to and scolds as if they were children, giving to each a name. When at the tanûr, baking, she gossips. She generally cooks once in the twenty-four hours, for the evening repast, to which her husband returns when his day's work is over.

[1] Tanûr, in Arabic, means a large earthenware jar, as big as a barrel, but deeper, which, let into the ground up to the rim, is heated within by brushwood or brambles, and serves to bake bread. It is generally covered with a shed, and serves for the use of all or a portion of the village, according as there is one or more. It is in this way I conceive that the passage " or ever your pots be made hot with thorns" is to be explained, by brambles thrown into the tanûr.

Midwifery at Abra was entirely in the hands of women.[1] A woman lay-in of her first child soon after I came to the village. She was half an hour in labour. All the married females of the village assembled on the occasion, and they instructed her how to act in her new situation. She was placed in the chair used on these occasions, a sketch of which I have annexed, having caused it to be brought to me for that purpose, and having thought it sufficiently curious to interest the Scriptural reader, who might find in it the explanation of a passage otherwise not quite intelligible.[2]



MIDWIFERY CHAIR.

A rope was made fast to the ceiling, by which the woman held, and hauled on it during her travail : at the

[1] Ce'st une chose terrible,que, depuis que les femmes se mêlent de faire des enfans, elles ne savent pas encore accoucher toutes seules.—*Mem. et Corresp. de Madame d'Epinay*, p. 272.

[2] " And the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, and he said, when ye do the office of a midwife to the Hebrew women, and see them upon the stools," &c.

same time the bystanders supported her under her armpits.[1]

It has occurred to all travellers, among people styled uncivilized, to observe with how much less pain and trouble the process of gestation and parturition goes on than among ourselves and other so called polished nations: as also how little care is bestowed on women during the days succeeding childbirth in comparison with the nursing they are said to require with us. But, what is more extraordinary still, such women, so neglected, seem to be less liable to bad accidents than those over whose welfare, physicians, midwives, nurses, and fond and foolish husbands, have watched with tender and unremitting anxiety. Does not this, or ought it not at least, to awake some doubts in our mind, as to which party pursues the right method; and whether over-officious zeal in some and mercenary motives in others have not tended to make of a natural act a very complicated and artificial one? for otherwise it would imply a defect of wisdom in our Creator to have left the great work of peopling the earth subject to the control and help of man. There are daily examples occurring of parturient women,

[1] Funem umbilicalem nunquam ligant, nisi retardetur secundarum disjunctio; quo in casu, funem, cultello divisum, parturientis femori nodo annectunt: nec memini, per tres annos, quibus hoc pago commoratus sum, ullam feminam hæmorrhagiâ mortuam esse.

whether with a view to hide their shame arising from a guilty connection, or whether from accident of warfare, or navigation, who are left without aid from their own sex or obstetrical assistance from the other: yet they bring their offspring into the world in safety, and are often observed to recover from this (certainly) painful act, quicker than if delivered by the rules of art. But these are partial and individual instances, and are nothing in the account with whole nations, where the office of accoucheur or midwife is hardly known, and where women think no more of bringing a child into the world, than of the maturation of a boil, which, when ripened, will heal and discharge its contents as a matter of course.

In a cold climate, and among a disgusting people, Dr. Clarke in his travels in Scandinavia (p. 403) says —" The journeys with raids (sledges) are of course liable to danger and to the utmost degree of fatigue: yet women, far advanced in pregnancy, are often the drivers; and such is their easy labour in parturition, that childbirth hardly occasions any interruption to the progress of the raid."

In England, the causes of unfavourable gestation and parturition, together with the subsequent danger to which women are supposed to be liable, I consider to be, first, stays; secondly, neglect of exercise and its consequences in impeded functions of the bowels; thirdly, the medicating of sickness; fourthly, unnecessary inter-

ference of accoucheurs; fifthly, heated rooms and the want of fresh air; sixthly, hurried and forced delivery; seventhly, hot beds; eighthly, unnecessary and prolonged confinement.

As there were no enclosed fields in the country, cattle turned out to graze were tended by a herdsman. Hence the place of herdsman to a village was of some importance in the eyes of the peasants, and was annually assigned to a man of approved vigilance. For this service he received by the year, from each owner of a pair of oxen, one mid and a half of wheat; for sheep and asses something less; and thus in proportion for all animals that graze. Every day, when daylight appeared, he walked through the village, and each cottager drove out of his cottage-stable his ass, goats, or oxen, which he purposed to send to pasture that day. The herd was thus assembled, and the herdsman, called in Arabic *râay*, conducts them afield, taking care to prevent them from straying into cornfields, vineyards, and the like. For such trespasses he was fined according to the decision of the *natûr* (or overseer) of the village. The natûr was always known by a stout stick, which he carried about with him; and his chief employ was to patrole day and night through the corn fields, orchards, vineyards, &c., to see that no damage was done.

Women seldom mixed in public diversions. On one occasion, after I had resided some time in the village, and was in some degree looked up to, Butrûs, a

peasant, came running into my cottage, with a stick in his hand, and out of breath. "For God's sake," (cried he) "there is my niece, Mariam, in the street, among a parcel of strange men, skipping about to a fellow who is beating a drum ;—do interpose, sir, and send her away. The village will get a bad name, and they will say of her that Bint Sulyba (the daughter of Sulyba) is a street-walker." This anecdote will serve to show the kind of demeanour which was expected in women, even of the lowest class, and in a small village. In France, an itinerant piper, in a similar place, would have all the lads and lasses dancing around him, and the old folks looking on.

It was about the 20th of February, 1814, that Lady Hester took possession of the monastery of Mar Elias, and I of my cottage at Abra. I had added to it a second cottage for a servants' room, opened a larger door, and endeavoured to make it habitable. Lady Hester's establishment was now very much reduced. As Beaudin recovered but slowly, she hired for a time, as interpreter, the same Damiani whose house we had inhabited.[1] Pierre was gone home to Dayr el Kamar, and had sent down as cook in his place a woman named Um Risk, who remained, as it will afterwards be seen, three years with her ladyship. Mariam had

[1] Extract from Let. xxiii. of a work entitled "Letters of a Prussian Traveller;" Sayda, Sept. 1814.

"The day before our departure, the French Consul introduced us to a Christian in the Levantine costume," (Damiani)

gone back to Latakia, and Stefano, who was in love with her, had followed her. I might be accused of inserting very frivolous details, were it not that the domestic incidents which, in travelling in Europe, would be but a counterpart of what occurs in every man's family every day, are here often novel, and always serve to render the picture of Turkish manners more complete. Lady Hester had no horses and no grooms: she rode out daily on a small ass, and was now fast recovering from the debility which successive illnesses had brought upon her.

In the mean time, people were busy in their conjectures as to the reappearance of plague. It had not discontinued raging at Damascus, and St. Jean d'Acre was said to be newly infected. Every reason led to suppose that it would reappear at Sayda this year: we accordingly prepared for it in the manner usual in the country. In times of insecurity, whether from plague or insurrection, or any other cause, the markets were in part or entirely shut up, and he who had not

"who, during the late war, acted as interpreter to Sir Sydney Smith, and is now major-domo to Lady Hester Stanhope, who, for several years past, has been travelling in the Levant. He informed us she was in a convent near the Drûze mountains, where she had been confined by indisposition, from which, however, she was fast recovering. When this lady visited Sayda, she wore a Turkish dress, and rode an Arabian charger, to the astonishment and admiration of the Turks, who hold her in the highest estimation; and we heard, in many places, that she was actually imagined to be an English princess."

had the precaution to provide against such contingencies found himself sorely straitened. It is with this view that annually a store is made, sufficient for the year's consumption, by every family that can afford it. About two hundred head of poultry were bought, with some sheep and lambs; rice, flour, wheat, figs, raisins, in fact everything that could be called dry stores, was laid in, enough for six or eight months, with oil, butter, candles, soap, &c. Thus provided, it was considered that, in a spot so retired, and so out of everybody's way, we could not very easily be exposed to danger. We were precisely like the crew of a well-victualled ship at sea: we had everything necessary within the walls; with this advantage, that instead of salt beef and hard biscuit we had abundance of fresh provisions. Individually, I must confess I did not look forward to this confinement with much satisfaction. Solitude is no disagreeable thing with a good library: rather otherwise; but books were not to be procured; Lady Hester never had any, and I had lost mine in the shipwreck.

Endowed with a very active mind, and convinced that neglect alone of many common precautions against the introduction of the plague caused the loss of a great number of lives, her ladyship bethought herself of writing to the Emir Beshýr, to advise him how to guard against its encroachments. She considered that the establishment of a patrole, which should watch all the outlets of the mountain, would be sufficient to keep

out persons suspected of infection ; and she suggested that a post should be established, as in Europe, by which all letters should be transmitted to and from the mountain, subject, in every direction where danger lay, to be fumigated or immersed in vinegar. Some correspondence passed on this subject, and M. Beaudin was sent to explain what was not clearly understood ; but nothing was adopted otherwise than had been customary in former cases. It is not unusual for Europeans, impressed with the notion that the Turks are an ignorant people, to offer them advice on many subjects, which, after all, are connected with a country with whose government, manners, usages, and climate they are unacquainted, and in which they arrive as strangers.

A month passed away at the monastery without any particular occurrence. I built a wall round my cottage, as a farther protection against danger from the plague, in imitation of Lady Hester, who had built one round her residence. The rains had occasionally been very violent, and the roofs of two cottages fell in from the additional weight given by a thorough soaking to the mould with which they were covered. There was not a roof in the village that was not leaky.

It will be recollected that, two years before, Lady Hester paid a visit to the Shaykh Beshýr, the chief of the Drûzes, at Mukhtâra. It was a custom with him to make a circuit annually through the Drûze villages, to administer justice, correct abuses, and collect his

rents. For though, as the supreme power was vested in the emir, he could not, properly, arrogate to himself more than the rights of a landlord, still it would seem that, acknowledged as the second person of the mountain, he was in fact the equal of the emir, and, acting accordingly, what he dared not do himself, he caused to be done by his influence. For his domains in villages, farms, orchards, vineyards, and plantations, were always equal to those of the emir himself, and, being by religion a Drûze, he was looked up to by that people as their lawful master.

In his tour he combined pleasure and business. He was accompanied by about fifty attendants, on foot and on horseback, some with guns, some with hawks and dogs, and he sported from village to village. This was his manner: his footmen scoured the neighbouring hills, and drove the game (chiefly red-legged partridges and antelopes) into the valleys, through which he rode in the midst of his falconers and dogs. In the mean time those on foot made the mountains re-echo with shouts; whilst the horsemen occupied the sides of the hills, between the ridges where the footmen were, and drove down the game that was started into the valleys in which the shaykh rode, where it was hawked, or shot, or run down by the dogs. In this way he arrived at Abra on the 20th of March, some servants having preceded him to prepare a cottage for his reception. A few carpets were spread over the mud floor, a cushion or two placed against

the wall for his sofa, and this was all that was thought necessary to make him comfortable; nor had he at night a bed to sleep on. When the shaykh was accommodated, his katibs and chief atttendants laid their hands on the next best cottages; nor did the peasantry dare on such occasions to do otherwise than yield them up immediately. There was, however, no confusion, and a stranger passing through the village would not have perceived any stir more than usual. Immediately on his arrival, the peasantry hastened to ask permission to be admitted to tell their grievances; but, on the circuit of this year, he confessed his dread of the plague by dispensing with the usual custom of having the hem of his robe, or his hand, kissed by all those who entered.

In the evening Lady Hester sent the dragoman to the shaykh with a message, expressing her regret at not being able to see him, from indisposition: the shaykh, in return, signified the pleasure he felt that she had finally fixed her abode among his people. It cannot be denied that the Orientals are well bred. His conduct on this occasion was very delicate. Fearful that Lady Hester would think it necessary to send him provisions for the night (as is customary on the arrival of any great person who is travelling) he had previously ordered them to be prepared. He was likewise exceedingly strict in commanding that, for the accommodation of himself or his people, not the slightest disturbance should be given to any person or

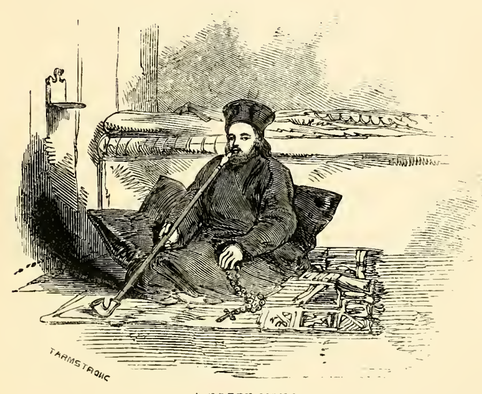
thing appertaining to Lady Hester. He left Abra on the morrow.

I occasionally rode out in the neighbourhood; and, among other places, went to a large monastery, distant about two hours, called St. Saviour's, or Dayr Mkhallas. The monasteries in the mountain, of which there are several, are generally very respectable but plain structures. They are, for the most part, quadrangular, with vaulted cells opening into the court, but which are arranged with little regard to symmetry. St. Saviour's was of the first rank, having a fraternity of fifty friars; and, from its situation on the very top of a mountain, wears an imposing appearance. The road to it was a rugged mule path, which wound and turned in a way unknown in England. Within a short distance, but with the intervention of a deep valley, was the village of Jôon, inhabited by Christians and Metoualis.

The monasteries of the Greek Catholics are as follow:—Dayr Mkhallas (Our Saviour's, near Jôon), with seventy friars; Dayr Sayda (our Lord's) with twelve friars; Dayr el Mezairy, near Gezýn, with six friars; Dayr Arnêk, above Dayr el Kamar, with six friars; Dayr Aishmayeh, with five friars; Dayr Ayn el Joze (or the walnut-spring,) in the Bkâa, with twelve friars; Dayr el Benât, (the maids') for women, near Dayr Mkhallas, with thirty to thirty-five nuns.

The Greek Catholics are called, indifferently, *malky*, or *kuwetly*, of the meaning of which words I must con-

fess myself ignorant. They have bishops at all the cities along the coast, also at Bâalbek, at Carah, at Nebk, &c. There is a sect of the *kuwetly*, which goes by the name of the *Shuwarya*. The Greek Catholic monks adopt the order of St. Basilius, and they smoke tobacco, drink wine, and eat flesh.



A GREEK MONK.

These Greek schismatics retain the dress peculiar to the monks of the Greek Church—a felt hat without a brim, the hair of the head unshorn, and a black woollen gown, girded with a black leather belt. They have blue cotton drawers, and, in the winter, are allowed to wear a coarse jacket over their gown. Their shoes are black, which, in a country where everybody but a priest wears them yellow or red, becomes a singularity also. There

are several monasteries of these monks in Mount Lebanon. Of these, the largest is that of St. Saviour, near to the village of Jôon, where reside the superior-general and the patriarch. The Maronites, with whom they are intermingled over the mountain, and who likewise own the supremacy of the pope, hold them nevertheless in aversion, principally, perhaps, because the Greek Catholics are permitted by their rules to smoke, drink coffee, and eat meat, (when not in seasons of fasting) whilst the Maronites are interdicted from every one of these indulgencies throughout the year.

There are to be found among the Malkys men of great acuteness, and who are well versed in church learning; but the major part of them are no better than peasants, being employed in rearing silkworms, in ploughing land, and other works of husbandry. Such, indeed, are always their occupations during their noviciate; and, in case they exhibit no striking talents, for the rest of their lives also. It must be observed that every article of food and raiment is manufactured by their own body.

At Dayr Mkhallas resided the patriarch of the Greek Catholics, proprietor of Dayr Mar Elias, and successor of him who died there just before our arrival. His name was Macarius, which he had assumed on his elevation to the patriarchal dignity. He was a man of little conversation, and rather awkwardly professed his hope that Lady Hester would long continue to occupy his humble residence. These dignitaries of the

Eastern church are accessible to the lowest person, and are not those of old, who could make an emperor tremble on his throne: the most they can now do is to tamper in the intrigues of the mountain, a field too small to give scope to the ambition of a churchman; but even now they are approached with the greatest respect, and persons of their own sect kiss the ground before a patriarch, and then his robe.[1] He is waited upon by priests and deacons, who light his pipe, and do other menial offices about his person. In the East, all distinctions of rank are lost in the presence of a superior, if he be a great man, whether Christian or Moslem. Before a pasha, his vizir, or kekhyah, stands, nor dares sit, unless told to do so. In the same manner, a patriarch keeps his bishop on his legs; but, let the pasha or the patriarch disappear, the kekhyah and bishop will play the same farce with those next inferior to themselves. As the Porte acknowledges but one legitimate Christian church, which is the Greek, the Catholic patriarch cannot be seen in public in his robes, or, indeed, reside anywhere comfortably, but in Mount Lebanon.

On the 28th of March, M. Boutin, a French gentleman, arrived at Sayda, and lodged at his consul's. Lady Hester had known him at Cairo, where, on occasion of a dinner at the house of the French consul, she had turned into ridicule the mysterious air which

[1] Franks, of course, decline performing this ceremony.

he assumed, and had laughingly denounced him as a spy of Buonaparte's, as, in fact, he was: for he had served as colonel of engineers, and was now on a mission connected with his department. He was said to have been a great friend of Moreau's. He was much urged to remain at Sayda until the plague, which now began to reappear everywhere, should have subsided: but, not being willing to do so, he departed about the 5th or 6th of April, taking with him a servant of Lady Hester's, whom she ceded to him as likely to be useful on the journey; and so he would have been, but they were destined never to return. The servant was carried off by the plague, and M. Boutin was assassinated by his own Turkish domestics in an unfrequented part of the Ansáry mountains! His story will be related in another place.

It was now the time of Lent, which was kept with much strictness by the Greek Catholics: but their rigid observance of fasts savoured strongly of pride; and, even in my own little family, between Giovanni, who was a Roman Catholic, and the kitchen girl, who was a Greek Catholic, I was often made very angry. Whatever I left at dinner was thrown to the dogs. What was cooked for me would neither do for man nor maid: and what was cooked for the man would not do for the maid, because their fasts fell at different times, according to the old and new style. Yet would they drink drams, lie, cheat, or do anything morally wrong, and then look me in the face,

and justify their conduct, because, forsooth, they had not broken the fast.

The rains this year had continued somewhat later than usual; but the weather was now become very fine and warm, and the breeding of silkworms had begun to busy the whole of the peasantry. On the first days of April, the worms were hatched from their eggs, by being carried for a day or two in the bosoms of the women; that kind of warmth, or that degree of it, being found to be most fit for the purpose.

Nasýfa, widow of Murad Bey, once the ruler of Egypt, whose acquaintance Lady Hester had made whilst she was at Cairo, sent her about this time a black slave, named Hanýfy. She was thirteen years old, and exceedingly well made. Much pains were taken to render her a good servant; and, as she had been bred a Mahometan, her ladyship never would allow any attempts to be used to convert her to Christianity, but caused an old imàm of Sayda to come, day by day, to give her instructions in her religion, and to teach her the forms of prayer. Many pious persons may be disposed to blame Lady Hester, who thus shut out from a young mind the light of the Gospel; but she was accustomed to say, "I am a philosopher and not a missionary, and, between millions of Mahometans and millions of Christians, who dispute which is the right way to Heaven, I never pretend to set myself up as a judge which is the best."

When Hanýfy came from Egypt to Syria, a letter was sent with her, describing her merits by negatives; there being, in a new bought slave, few positive qualities ascertainable, until he or she has been some time in the possession of a purchaser. This letter was written by the person at Cairo into whose trust Hanýfy had been delivered, and by whose wife all proper examination had been made of her fitness for her new station. The slave-sellers are accustomed to give three days' trial, and the result was that, Hanýfy did not snore, did not talk or walk in her sleep, had a pleasant voice, seemed docile; that her back was not crooked; and that she had no bodily deformity. Such was the character she brought with her; and whether she was virtuous and good never seemed to have troubled the inquirer's mind.

Just at this time, I was exceedingly delighted by an unexpected discovery of an ancient sepulchre, made not far from my residence. As I now spoke Arabic, the news of the day often formed a subject of conversation between me and the villagers, my neighbours. One evening, a peasant, who was sufficiently aware of the curiosity which European travellers feel upon matters connected with the ancient history of these countries, informed me, that a cavern, full of painted figures, had been discovered, the preceding evening, within a short distance of Sayda. He added other circumstances sufficient to excite in me a desire to see it. Having, therefore, acquainted myself with the

situation of the place, I went to it on the following morning.

The spot to which I had been directed was about half a mile to the north-east of Sayda, close to a deep glen, named Wady Abu Ghyás, and within a hundred yards of one of the gardens to the east. A camel, whilst grazing here, sunk into a hole knee-deep, where it remained without being able to extricate itself. The driver, having relieved it from its distressing situation, was naturally induced to look down, and examine the hole; and, as it appeared to go to some depth, the constant notion which prevails (as has been before said) among all classes of people in the East, of hidden treasures, led him to fancy that it might be an opening to something of this kind; so he proceeded to enlarge it. The soil readily yielded, and presented the appearance of an underground chamber. Eager to realize the good fortune which awaited him, as he now supposed, he procured a light, and, letting himself down into the opening, found himself in a spacious vault, the walls of which were covered with painted figures almost as large as life. He cautiously proceeded to examine the place, when, having convinced himself that his search would turn to no profitable end, he ascended to the open day, and went and communicated his discovery to the people of a caravansery, the resort, as in the inns of other countries, of many idlers. Some of these returned with him to the cavern: and the superstition of a part of

them immediately converted the figures into a representation of Christian mysteries, a circumstance not worth mentioning, if it were not that this notion was afterwards the cause of their being defaced by the Turks.



INTERIOR OF A GREEK SEPULCHRE.

It was on the morning succeeding the discovery that I went to the spot. The chamber was crowded with people, brought thither by the report which had been circulated the preceding evening in Sayda respecting it. The Turks had already picked out the eyes of one of the most beautiful figures, and otherwise de-

faced it. Being known in the neighbourhood, my interference had some effect in stopping them from proceeding farther, and I succeeded in convincing such as were then present that the paintings had no Christian symbol, and consequently could not be, as they imagined, any representation of the Holy Supper, or of the Virgin Mary, &c. as they thought them. But party succeeded party, and the task of reasoning with them all was impossible; for, to portraits of the human figure, whether Christian or pagan, the Turks are always enemies. Having no drawing materials, I could only take a hasty sort of outline in ink, which sketch, however, afterwards served me somewhat in the restoration of parts of some of the figures, subsequently destroyed. I again visited the cavern on the following day. Just at this time the plague broke out, and, raging terribly, spread consternation in the village of Abra, and in the town of Sayda. Called away by my medical duties towards others, and by the feeling of self-preservation, which forbade me to risk the danger resulting in pestiferous times from the contact of strange persons, so inevitable in a confined place, the sepulchre was abandoned. I will here anticipate the order of my journal, and relate how I afterwards made copies of these paintings, a rough sketch of which is here given.

The plague ceased in the month of July. I then bethought myself again of the sepulchre, and revisited it. Much injury had been done to

the paintings. The only chance which remained of rescuing them from oblivion was the arrival of some traveller in these parts who could draw. This hope was not realized until the year 1816, when, in the month of March, Mr. William Bankes, the late Member of Parliament for Cambridge University, came to Mar Elias; and, having convinced me, by several drawings which he showed me, that he was an excellent draftsman, I conducted him to the sepulchre. This gentleman compared the paintings in it to those at Herculaneum.

During the lapse of a few months, considerable damage had been caused by the alluvion of mould driven in by the rains. The figures nearest the entrance were covered by it up to the shoulders, and the floor was sodden with wet. Mr. Bankes, nevertheless, executed in two days a perspective view of the interior, in colours. But he carried his projects yet farther: for he formed the design of removing some of these fresco-paintings from their places, and, accordingly, employed a mason to cut them out from the piers of the walls; which was effected in two instances.

Soon after this he departed, and, just at the time, a supply of drawing materials reached me from England. In watching the delineations I had seen made by him, I had conceived them to be inadequate to the purpose of giving a complete representation of the sepulchral chamber, more especially as the ceiling had been en-

tirely left out, and some other omissions made, which seemed to me material. I accordingly set diligently to work, and copied them as well as I could.[1]

For the better elucidation of our subject, it will be proper to say a few words on the different kinds of tombs and sepulchres common to the country of which we are now speaking.

The traveller, who visits the Levant, cannot fail to be struck with the numerous excavations which are found near the site of almost every ancient city. These are readily understood from their form to have been sepulchres. They occur in a variety of shapes: some are simple oblong sarcophagi, hewn out of the rock, and only capacious enough to hold one human body; others are spacious grottoes several yards in length and width, in the sides of which recesses or cells were hollowed out as receptacles of the dead; whilst, intermediate to these two, is a multitude of others, the size of which, and the more or less labour bestowed in making them, depended, it may be conjectured, on the means of those who caused them to be excavated.

[1] I was generally in the sepulchre, from ten in the morning until four in the afternoon, and was obliged to have three assistants, two holding candles, whilst a third sponged the paintings, as I copied them, in order to bring out the colours, which method I learned from Mr. Bankes. Every thing was begun and completed on the spot, nothing being worked up at home; a custom too common with some persons, whose recollection is made to supply the place of reality.

Through the whole length of the coast of Syria, from Laodicea to Jaffa, we had remarked these sepulchres, and had observed them, likewise, in the interior of the country: as at Heliopolis or Bâlbec, at Malûla, a village on the road from Damascus to Emesa, at Jerusalem, at Damascus, and at other places: but, in every instance, they were open; always in a state of decay, from the effects of time and the weather, and seemed long to have been the haunts of jackalls, or the pens of sheep and goats. In all of them little remained beside the bare rock, out of which they had been chiselled.

A concise description of the various forms observable in these sepulchres may not be unnecessary, as introductory to our particular subject.

The rudest sarcophagi, and such as we may suppose served for the tombs of the common people, were oblong parallelograms (*fig.* 3), large enough to receive (besides the corpse) a case or coffin enclosing it: these were hewn out on the surface of any convenient rock.[1] Such seem to have been covered with a double pent lid (*fig.* 1 *and* 4), which had within a concavity corresponding to the exterior, and in them perhaps were placed *terra cotta* coffins; a conjecture rendered probable by the discovery made in 1805 of a coffin[2]

[1] The sepulchre shown as that of Our Saviour at Jerusalem, as well as that of Nicodemus at Bethlehem, is of this kind.

[2] It was found near the spring which supplies the village of Abra with water. A French gentleman, at that time residing

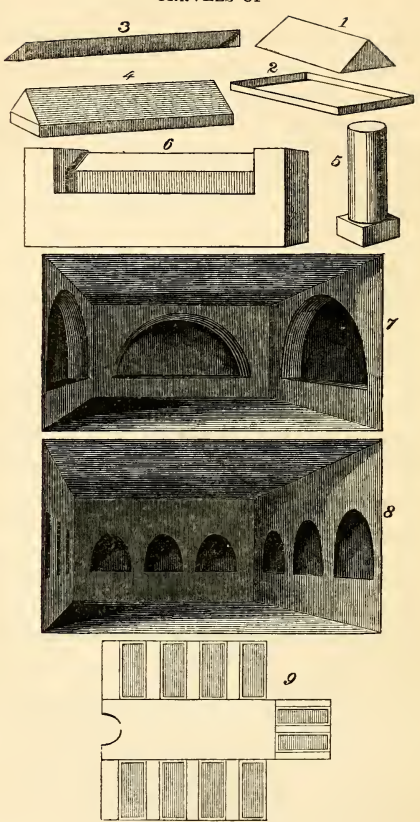
of this material, found entire in one of these sarcophagi near the city of Sidon.

There was a second sort of sarcophagus (*fig.* 6), of the same shape, as to the interior, with the first mentioned, and hewn likewise out of the rock; but the rock was chiselled away externally, so as to leave it entirely in relief and insulated.[1] The lids and sides of this sort were plain in some, and in others sculptured into ornaments, mostly consisting of bulls' heads and festoons of flowers.[2] Of the plain kind several are still remaining on the road from Sayda to Beyrout, near what is called the Guffer or toll-house. This spot has obtained the name of the Jews' Sepulchres (Kabûr el Yahûd). Numberless fragments of this kind of sarcophagus are to be seen in and near every town in Syria, often of marble, and sculptured in the most finished manner.

near the village, heard of the circumstance as a matter of gossip among the servants of his house, but too late to save it. It had been broken to pieces by the peasant boys, who attached no more value to it than to a common piece of useless pottery. A gold ring and a pair of ear-rings of the same metal were in it, and were sold to the goldsmiths of Sayda, who melted them down to make more modern trinkets.

[1] "Near it there are many sepulchres cut in the rock; some of them like stone coffins above ground: others are cut into the rocks like graves, having stone covers over them."—*Maundrell.*

[2] "The chests were carved on the outside with ox heads, and wreaths hanging between them, after the manner of adorning heathen altars."—*Maundrell,* p. 11, f. ed.



VARIOUS SARCOPHAGI HEWN OUT OF ROCKS.

A third kind of sarcophagus is that hewn horizontally, like an oven, in the sides of rocks. In these were placed earthenware coffins, like that described in the preceding page. The whole length of the cavity was, in one instance which I measured, somewhat more than that of the human body. At the mouth, or at the bottom, or somewhere near it, there was placed a tablet or a stele (*fig.* 5), with the name of the deceased on it.[1]

Another kind consisted of an arched alcove, excavated in the side of a rock, the base in its whole length being a sarcophagus. Sometimes these were single; at other times they were triple, and then occupied the three sides of a subterraneous chamber; the doorway filling up the fourth. (*Fig.* 7.)

After these come the sepulchres on a larger scale, containing several recesses (*fig.* 8), in which the sarcophagi are perpendicular to the sides, and not, as just seen, parallel. In some instances these sarcophagi are excavated breast high from the ground, and are of a length and height just sufficient for the sliding in of a coffin. Of these there is one in a garden near Sayda, in tolerable preservation. The chamber is subterranean; and although the inscriptions[2] over the mouth

[1] A flat tablet, once in my possession, was found, together with the earthenware coffin, near Abra spring. I could not gain correct information as to the position which it occupied.

[2] I have found among my papers the copy of an inscription

of each sarcophagus are still legible, yet the stucco which coated the walls is, from the moisture which oozes through the ceiling, quite discoloured, and, in many places, crumbled away. In the immediate vicinity of the same city are perhaps a hundred sepulchral chambers, the general conformation of which varies only in the greater or less number of the cells.

These form a sixth class, wherein the cells are squares or parallelograms, having their sarcophagi sunk from the level of the floor. *(Fig. 9)* Most of them have an arched entrance, where once hung a door. In one or two only can be discovered some indistinct remains of the sculpture which adorned the entrance or the interior. In a few of them some bones are found, but all seem to have been rifled, and marks of the pickaxe are often visible in the sides and in the floors, proceeding, no doubt, from the attempts which have been made to find treasures, supposed to have been concealed in them.

In some places two or more sepulchres are connected with each other by a door of communication, although examples of this are fewer along the coast than in the interior. Near the sea, throughout the whole length of Mount Lebanon and the mountainous chain north-

which I believe to have been taken from one of them. It is as follows:

ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΣΔΙΟΝΥΣΙΟΥΦΙΛΙΟΣ
ΛΕΟΝΙΔΟΥΑΛΥΠΟΙΧΑΙΡΕΤΕ.

ward of it, an argillaceous rock, easy to work and easy of access, afforded great facilities for these excavations, and probably induced each separate family to choose its own tomb apart from that of another: in the interior of the country other causes seem to have operated. Thus, in the modern village of Malûla, on the road from Damascus to Emesa, the modern Hems, where a solitary projecting rock seems to have confined these excavations within a narrow compass, we find innumerable chambers hewn into a variety of forms, close to and above each other, and in many cases communicating. The outer one, by which entrance is obtained to the others, in some instances has its door several yards from the ground, and is accessible only by a ladder, or by steps cut out of the rock, probably to prevent sacrilegious profanation.[1]

Before we come to the sepulchral chamber with

[1] Maundrell seems to have thought that they were calculated for places of security, for he says (page 117, Oxford, 1732, 8vo.)—"We were carried . . . to see a place . . . which very well deserves a traveller's attention. At about the distance of a mile from the sea there runs along a high rocky mountain, in the side of which are hewn a multitude of grots, all very little differing from each other. They have entrances of about two feet three quarters. On the inside you find in most of them a room of about four yards square, on the one side of which is the door, on the other there are as many little cells, elevated about two feet above the floor. . . . The great doubt concerning them is whether they were made for the dead or for the living."

the paintings, I will first say a few words of another of the same kind, discovered posterior to that above mentioned. Its existence was made known to me by one of the boys, who assisted in holding the candles during the time I was employed in drawing. A description of it will serve as a useful step to the gradations which we have been trying to establish in tracing these sepulchres from their simple to their most perfect shape.

It is situate, like the other, on the first rise of Mount Lebanon, within a mile and a half of Sayda, and almost due east of it, above and near to the small village of Heleléyah, and close to the footpath leading from that village to Dayr Mar Elias. The entrance was almost choked up with mould, washed in (as in the foregoing instance) by the winter rains. Being provided with candles, I entered, and found it to be a low vaulted chamber. In the sides and extremity of it were cells, having in their floors sarcophagi, which sarcophagi had evidently been rifled many generations ago. On the ceiling was painted, towards the four corners, a something not unlike a carpenter's square. The south-east side was totally defaced, and the bottom nearly so. The chamber was hewn out of an argillaceous rock : but it seemed to have been executed with no great care, as the sides and arches of the recesses had many inequalities.

I now proceed to the description of the cavern at Abu Ghyás ; this being, as we have already observed,

the name given to the sepulchral chamber, near the glen so called.

The ground plan *(see fig. 9, p. 346, and p. 340)* represents an oblong chamber, 27 feet long by 10 feet wide. On each side were four recesses or cells; and at the bottom, facing the entrance, two. Each recess contained two sarcophagi, two of which were free from rubbish; but, in the remaining cells, the mould covered them so completely as to render it impossible to come at them.

The ceiling was slightly arched, and, from the centre of it to the floor, the height was nine feet. The whole was hewn out of a rock, and worked with much exactitude.[1] It is probable that the descent into it was by steps; but these were now entirely hid by the mould washed in through the aperture, and which, accumulated near the entrance, threatened to choke up the vault altogether. The four sarcophagi not covered with mould were in length about 6 feet 8 inches by two feet wide. In them I found a few human bones. They had no coating, nor any remains to show of what materials the coffins, once deposited in them,

[1] Maundrell bears testimony to the neat workmanship of places of this description in Syria. He says, "But, within, you arrive in a large and fair room about seven or eight yards square, cut out of the natural rock. Its sides and ceiling are so exactly square, and its angles so just, that no architect, with lead and plummet, could build a room more regular, and the whole is so firm and entire that it may be called a chamber hollowed out of one piece of marble."

had been. The lids of the sarcophagi in the left hand corner were still lying on them in broken fragments, and appeared to have been each composed of one single block of stone, without any sculptured ornaments on it. These sarcophagi, like those we have before described, bore evident marks of having been opened forcibly; for the sake, probably, of the gold ornaments usually left on the persons of the dead; or possibly from fanaticism.

The cells were painted, and each in a different pattern, but always in plain or flowered stripes parallel to each other. It will be observed that one of the recesses or cells was longer than the rest. Was it that the heads of a family, or the founders of a sepulchre, laid claim to this distinction?

Between every two cells was a pier, so that each side consisted of four cells with intermediate piers, and the bottom of two, with one intermediate pier. These were surmounted by a cornice, comprehended in a double border, between which were painted festoons of red roses, tied at each end, and hung on a light blue ground. The piers, which measured 57 inches in height, but varied in breadth from 27 to 40 inches, were ornamented with figures in fresco, 4½ feet in length, painted on a fawn or stone-coloured ground. In three of them the colouring admitted of being examined very closely: but the other six were done in a bold manner, and would not bear the eye too near to them. Seven of the nine figures were represented

carrying a dish, as if for a repast. Over the first was the word ΓΑΥΚΩΝ; on the second pier was a female with a scroll in her hand, apparently a priestess; on the third a female resting on an urn. There was a peculiarity observable in this and two other figures, that lines seemed to have been drawn by the artist for his guidance as to the proportions of the body. The next figure had the word ΚΟΛΟΚΕΡΟϹ: the next ΕΛΙΚΩΝ: the next ΠΕΤΗΝΟϹ: one was without a name: and the last had ΝΗΡΕΥϹ.

The ceiling was not the least curious part of the sepulchre. It has been said that it was arched. On a slate-coloured or light blue ground, scattered roses, with here and there some single flowers of a different kind, were painted in red. Among these were mingled, without any regard to order, wreaths of roses, knotted at the end, which, at first sight, seemed like so many centipedes. Birds of various kinds, with their wings shut, and winged boys in the act of flying, were interspersed.

Thus, then, I have endeavoured to describe, more minutely perhaps than was necessary, the interior of this tomb. But to some persons, lovers of antiquity, such details may not be uninteresting; and I shall perhaps be excused, if, in explanation of the figures and ornaments painted on the walls, I add an ancient inscription, which seems illustrative of them. It is as follows:—

Tib: Claudius Drusi F. Cæs. Aug. Germ. Pont. Max. Trib. Pot. ii Con. Desig. iii Imp. iii P. P. Dec. vij Collegii Fabri M.

R. H. S. M. et libertate donavit sub conditione ut quotannis rosas ad monumentum ejus deferant, et ibi epulentur dumtaxat in v. Id. Jul. Quod si negligerint, tunc ad viij ejusdem Collegii pertinere debebit conditione supradictâ.—

Tiberius Claudius, son of Drusus, Cæsar, Augustus, Germanicus, High Pontiff, twice Tribune, thrice Consul Elect, thrice Imperator, Father of his country—hereby hath given to seven decurions of the Faber (smith's?) College of the municipality of Ravenna a thousand Sestertii (£8 1s. 5½d.) and their liberty, on condition that, every year, they carry to his tomb roses, and make one repast in it on the 5th of the ides of July only. But, should they neglect to do this, then will it belong to eight others of the same College upon the above conditions.—*Inscription on the tomb of Drusus:* vid. *Lives of Suetonius, by* Henri Ophellot de la Pause, p. 100, vol. iii. 8vo.

This inscription throws light on our subject in two ways—first, from it we learn that it was customary for the living to make feasts in the sepulchres of their deceased relations and friends; and next, to scatter roses over their graves. It is not unlikely, therefore, that the sum appropriated to this purpose might, in the course of years, cease to be paid; and, instead, a representation of that which was before substantially done be substituted: when, as in this case, we should have, painted on the walls, servants carrying dishes, a priestess reading, and another making libations. The ceiling would be sprinkled with roses; and, in a word, we should have the same picture which we actually find here.

But, that such was the custom, we have farther

proof in a dissertation on this very subject inserted in the *Thes: Antiq: Rom:* vol. xii., p. 1074, fol. *Lug: Bat:* 1699 : for, in a description of the ancient sepulchres of the family of the Nasones, by J. P. Bellorius, (after having spoken of the several rites customary on the death of great persons,) he goes on in the following words, which are here a translation, the original text being subjoined.[1]

[1] Pauca adhuc dicenda restant de floribus, coronis, et sertis variis, quæ in hoc multisq: aliis sepulchris picta et sculpta reperiuntur. Nimirum pertinet ad morem veterum Romanorum, à Græcis derivatum, non solum coronandi mortuos suos, sed etiam sepulchra eorum quotannis honorandi sparsione florum, rosarum, et unguentorum; quoniam existimabant hæc defunctis esse gratissima. Mos hic adeo erat receptus, ut quidam, moribundus, hæredes suos, in tabulis testamenti, officii hujus præstandi necessitate adstringeret; ingenti pecuniæ summâ huic fini destinatâ. Quod testantur, non solum auctores Græci et Latini, sed etiam—inscriptiones et ornamenta sepulchralia, quæ, ut hodieque ex antiquis monumentis apparet, ex coronis, sertis, frondibus, et floribus, constabant. Neque solum præcipiebant ut sibi quotannis rosis et odoribus parentaretur, sed etiam, eum in finem, sibi comparabant hortos, sepulchris suis vicinos, ut ex illorum reditibus parentalia ille fierent: quod ex sequenti inscriptione colligitur. Long: Patrollus, secutus pietatem col: centum hortos cum ædificio huic sepul. juncto vivus donavit, ut ex reditu eorum largius rosæ et escæ patrono suo et quandoque sibi parentaretur.—Forma usitata est in antiq: inscrip.—Ut quotannis rosas ad monumentum ejus deferant. Rosæ, minirum, præ omnibus aliis floribus in maximo habebantur pretio. Sed, &c.—Vid. eod. vol. *De jure manium* à Jacobo Gutheri, lib. 2. cap. xxviii.

Again,—Porro solenne fuit antiquis Græcis et Romanis

We will only add a few words more touching the flowers, wreaths, and different kinds of garlands, which are found, either *painted* or sculptured, in many sepulchres. This, indeed, appertains to a custom of the old Romans, by them borrowed from the Greeks, of not only binding a wreath round the temples of the dead, but also of honouring their tombs by annually strewing flowers and roses, and by sprinkling odours [in them]; for they had a notion that this was grateful to the defunct. And such usages were so prevalent, that many, on the approach of death, tied down their heirs, by clauses in their wills, to the performance of this duty; a large sum of money being set apart for the purpose. This we learn, not only from ancient authors, both Greek and Latin, but likewise from sepulchral inscriptions and decorations: which last, as we gather from ancient tombs still remaining, consisted of wreaths, garlands, foliage, and flowers. Nor did they merely enjoin that these annual obsequies should be celebrated by roses and odours; but, moreover, with this very view, they purchased gardens [or orchards] adjoining their sepulchres, and appropriated the rents of them to their obsequies: which may be inferred from the following inscription.—Long: Patrollus, influenced by the religious observances of his order, did, during his lifetime, make a donation of a hundred fruit orchards, with the building adjoining this sepulchre, in order that, from their rents, an abundant supply of roses and herbs might be appropriated to his patron's obsequies [might adorn his patron's grave,] and, some day, his own.

cænas ferales apparare statis et anniversariis sæpe temporibus, cùm in honorem ac memoriam defuncti, tùm ut per vini cibique lenimen ejus desiderium levaretur. Petebat autem stulta gentilitas mortuorum animas ab inferis reduces iis vesci et delectari.

The formula most used in ancient inscriptions is—'That roses be brought annually to his monument:' because roses were considered more costly than other flowers.

These remarks are quite in point, and make sufficiently clear the purpose of the ornaments painted in this sepulchre. For, when the survivors of a dead person were unable, for want of funds set apart for that purpose, to bring fresh roses, garlands, &c., and to give banquets in his honour, we may suppose that they then caused, as being next to the reality, a representation of such funereal ceremonies to be depicted on the walls of his sepulchre.

But what is somewhat in confirmation of this ancient custom is a usage which still obtains among the Christians and Mahometans of Egypt. Every year they perform funereal rites at the tombs of their deceased relations. These consist in going to the cemetery, a whole family together; and there, under a tent, or, if rich people, in a small structure raised for that purpose over the tomb, they pass several days, moaning and howling at certain intervals, and then quietly amusing themselves in eating, smoking, conversation, or whatever else they please to do.

Of the antiquity of tombs hollowed out in rocks we have the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, as used by the Jews, and of Herodotus, as common among the Egyptians. The Greeks originally burned their dead: and it was, probably, at the time of the invasion of the Persian empire by Alexander, that the custom of using stone coffins was first adopted by them.

CHAPTER XI.

Plague at Abra—Terror occasioned by it—Peasants forsake the village—Alarm of Lady Hester—Imaginary virtues of bezoar and serpent stone—Funerals—Embarrassment of the Author—Illness of his servant—Increase of the contagion—Medical Treatment — Arrival of the Kite sloop of war — Number of victims of the plague—Pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Haneh—Prickly heat—Lady Hester goes to reside at Meshmûshy—Costume of the Drûzes—Maronite monastery —Camel's flesh eaten—Bridge of Geser Behannýn—Journey of the Author to Bteddyn — Sons of the Emir Beshýr — Wedding at Abra—Moorish Conjuror—Return of Giorgio—Vineyards — Wines — Dibs — Raisins — Olive Harvest—Figs—Country between Abra and Meshmûshy.

From the end of March the plague had been reported to have shown itself in Sayda: still, up to the middle of April, no sure information could be obtained. At last, however, the number of deaths put the matter beyond doubt, and the more prudent part of the inhabitants began to prepare for shutting up their houses: and in the village of Abra, the

peasants consulted me on the propriety of forbidding any person to go to Sayda under any pretext whatever.[1] The order was easy of execution as far as regarded Sayda, but it was not so in respect to the gardens. Many of the peasants bred silkworms by mulberry leaves brought thence, which they fetched night and morning; and, as these poor people calculated on the profits of their silk, as those of Kent do on hop-picking, they conceived any risk preferable to such a loss.

On the 26th the repairs of the convent being concluded, Lady Hester desired a cask of wine to be given away among the workmen and the villagers. This was done at the door of my cottage, and both men and women drank with such avidity that one woman fell drunk in the road, and others were inebriated. A dance was performed by some of the young men, accompanied by singing in dialogue, which was very amusing. A group represents a party of Arabs, who, by a description of the charms of a damsel of their tribe, invite a youth to take her for his bride. In proportion as the youth's imagination is warmed by their eulogy, they increase their demands for her price: at last, they work upon him so greatly, that, after having given his camel, mare, tent, and all he is possessed of, piece by piece, he strips off every

[1] The provisions for the monastery were:—4 kilos of borgûl; 75 rotolos of oil; 2 cwt. of figs; butter, dibs, raisins, wood, and charcoal in proportion: also flour, rice, &c.

article of dress from his person, and offers them also.[1]

On the 29th one of the peasants, named Constantine, who had been present at this ceremony, died; and his death, which was immediately attributed to plague, excited great consternation; as every body had mixed in the crowd before my door where he was. No suspicion was entertained even that he was ill, until the day of his death, when, of his own accord, he expressed a wish to confess himself; and the curate immediately afterwards gave notice that he was dying. The circumstances of his death were remarkable. He was about sixty years old, and had not, for many years, been to the hot bath; when, in an unlucky hour, the fancy took him to go to one at Sayda, wherein, or at which time, he caught the plague. It was not certainly known how many days he had been ill, but it was generally supposed seven or eight: although every body averred that he had been walking about, or at his accustomed labour of ploughing, up to the day preceding his death. Even on the morning of the day on which he died, he went with some other peasants to Dayr Makhallas, on business with his landlord, the patriarch. He saw the prelate, obtained

[1] I chanced afterwards to hear the same ballad sung on other occasions, but I remarked that those who sung it always arranged themselves in file, and assumed an attitude such as is seen on Egyptian monuments, where all the arms and legs have the same position.

his answer to his demands, and returned, as he went, on foot. At two he took to his bed; about three said he wished to confess; and at eight was a corpse. I afterwards witnessed some other remarkable instances of the sturdy resistance which these mountaineers made to sickness.

No sooner was the cause of the death of Constantine ascertained than the peasants took the necessary steps for their security. Application was made to Lady Hester for an order to turn the family of the deceased, and those who were known to have been near him in his illness, out of the village: which was immediately granted, and the performance of it was fixed for the ensuing morning. I made use of what arguments I could to persuade them of the necessity of burying the corpse; but nobody was found willing to carry it to the grave. At length, filial duty and the ties of kindred induced his son and a young man betrothed to his daughter to perform this last office for him: and, about nine o'clock at night, without any of the customary funeral ceremonies, the body was borne to the churchyard, on an opposite hill a quarter of a mile off, and thrown into a cave. The next morning at daylight the family retired from their cottages to a valley under the village, where was a spring of water and a grotto in the rock, which afforded them a tolerable habitation and a cover from the sun.

It is not to be imagined that, in Syria, in the

month of May, there is any hardship in being compelled to live in the fields. A fine climate renders the shade of a tree more agreeable than the most commodious apartment. The natives, indeed, profess that they would often reside from choice in the fields, were it not that the security of their persons and property against robbery, as well as against soldiers, obliges them to live within doors.

In a day or two the consternation and prudence of the peasants subsided, so that they again resorted to the gardens as before. But on Sunday, May the 8th, their terror was renewed by the certainty that four of Constantine's family had fallen ill at once, nine days from his death. This marked interval between infection and the manifestation of the disease will show that, such persons as magnify the powers of contagion by statements that the plague can communicate and declare itself within twenty-four hours, nay, within one hour, are probably deceived; for, in this case and some others which I observed, an interval of eight, eleven, or more days, elapsed. Thus it was, that, on the 4th of May, a man died of the plague at the village of Salhyah, one mile from Abra: and, a fortnight after, his father, mother, and sister, were attacked and died in three days.

The next day three children in the village were found to be infected; and, on the 10th, Constantine's son, a youth of twenty, who was taken ill on the 8th, died. The children were immediately expelled from the

village, and betook themselves to the same place as the others, now a sort of lazaretto. On the 11th, six more fell ill. The panic became general. Each family in the village packed up bed and baggage, and fled to the neighbouring fields, where, constructing huts of stakes, canes, and leafy boughs, sufficient for themselves and their silkworms, which they took with them, they mutually avoided each other. I and my servants, with four families besides, alone remained. Giovanni was so alarmed, that, had he known where to seek refuge, he would have left me also.

During this time everybody in the Convent was in good health: so that, when the cases of infection multiplied in the village, Lady Hester became frightened, and thought it better, surrounded as I had been with the infected, that I should converse with her in the outer court of the convent, without entering any of the rooms: and during the remainder of this plague I continued to do so. When at Latakia, she had purchased some bezoar and serpent stones, in which Orientals have great faith; and she was now desirous of trying their efficacy on those infected with the plague. The results were, as might be expected, not satisfactory. She next went in person to the spot where Constantine's family was, and gave them Dr. James's powders to take, and money to buy themselves provisions; but her humanity and courage could not save them.

From the 11th to the 17th persons were daily taken ill, and deaths daily happened; so that, from

the 8th to the 17th, I reckoned thirty cases of infection and thirteen deaths. On the event of a death in a village, it was customary before the plague for everybody to join the funeral, and mourn and howl over the corpse; the women beating their breasts, whilst the men loosened their shawls from their heads, and used other tokens of despair. On such occasions, too, the peasants from the neighbouring villages would assemble and join in the ceremony. The corpse was carried on a bier, dressed; as coffins are not in use among the Christians of Mount Lebanon. But when Nicôla, son of Constantine, died, it was impossible to find any one to bury him; and men were sent for from Sayda, who devoted themselves, for the sake of a trifling gain, to almost certain destruction; since, for three piasters a head, they came a distance of three miles, and carried a pestiferous corpse to a charnel-house.

The burying-ground of Abra was near the church, on a hill facing the village. The cries of his intended brother-in-law (who alone followed him to the grave) were heard very distinctly in the stillness of noonday, the hour that he was carried to his last home. It was a mournful scene, and the young man's moans haunted me in my sleep for some nights afterwards. Nor by day was my mind free from trouble on my own account: for it will readily be conceived that, in cases like the present, every one must labour under many apprehensions and difficulties. The spring

from which water was brought was half a mile off; and, whilst my maid servant was gone to fetch it, for I durst not employ any one else, I was in a state of constant apprehension lest her imprudence should expose her to infection. Nor could I be sure, when from home myself, that she or the man would not have communication with dangerous persons. I durst not send out my linen, which, in consequence, she was obliged to wash. On the 17th of May, Giovanni was suddenly seized with vomiting and giddiness, both symptoms of the plague. I immediately hired two men to build a hut in a retired spot under some olive-trees, and sent for a Turk from Sayda to come and nurse him: then, communicating to Lady Hester my apprehensions that Giovanni had caught the infection, which from him would almost certainly be caught by me, I returned to my cottage. My maid servant fled, and I remained alone, with the agreeable reflection that I must now cook and wash for myself; for I was become a dangerous person to approach. I could not hire a Turkish servant for myself also; for a Turk may have touched an infected person before coming to you, and, when shut up, may be found himself to be infected. I fumigated my cottage throughout, in which, too, I was somewhat unfortunate; for, after the plague was over, a peasant woman laid claim to compensation from me, because, she said, I had caused all her silkworms to die by the smell of my drugs.

The weather, on the 1st of May, had set in with

great heats, and the 14th and 20th were intolerably oppressive, augmenting, as it would seem, the violence of the contagion ; for the deaths and new cases of infection continued to increase. In Sayda, likewise, the deaths now amounted to ten a day. On the 21st, Giovanni's indisposition having turned out to be nothing but a bilious fever, and having yielded to the remedies I had given him, I took him back again to my cottage, to his and my own great satisfaction.

The difficulty of finding persons to bury the dead was greater than ever. The same men, who before had risked their lives for three piasters a head, now obtained nine, and a chicken besides, for burying an interesting young girl, named Berjût, the daughter of a peasant, whose beauty was of no common cast. Those of Constantine's family who continued to die were buried in holes close to the cave where they had lived, and became a prey to the jackalls.

On the 17th, a villager named Shahûd buried his own son. He was a poor peasant, whose only means of maintenance were derived from an ass, which he hired out to carry persons and burdens. Poor as he was, he loved his boy beyond measure. The body of Constantine had been thrown into a charnel pit, which was the common receptacle of the dead, where corpses were heaped one on another ; the entrance being merely blocked up with a large stone and mud cement. When Shahûd reopened it, to place his child there,

the sight of the corpse of the man whose imprudence had first brought the malady into the village so enraged him, that he endeavoured to drag it out, that he might vent his rage upon it, by leaving it to the jackalls: but it was too corrupt; and the limb by which he seized it separated (as he told me) from the trunk, and remained in his hand.

I now felt more comfortable, and renewed my visits, which, during Giovanni's illness, I had discontinued, to the infected around me. My plan was each day at two o'clock to ride out on an ass. I approached them within ten or twelve feet, and saw only those who could come out of their tents or grottoes to me. The mode of cure (I mean theirs) was confined to a bleeding, if they had strength enough to go down to Sayda to a Turkish barber, who for twenty paras, or fourpence, immediately opened a vein in the arm: but, if too weak for that, nothing was done. For, although to many I gave pills, powders, and potions, and they accepted them, I have reason to think they were seldom used. Plasters on their swellings they would readily apply, and would show them, to convince me they had done so; but I never was aware that this or any other remedy changed much the event of the malady; nor did I find any preventive of use but keeping out of its way.[1]

[1] "And here we may remark that, in our minds, the notion is altogether ill-founded, which attributes a preventive efficacy in cases of fever to certain drugs; such as camphor, aromatic

Besides the preceding instance of manly resistance to disease, I had an opportunity of seeing another, as remarkable, in the case of a girl nine years old. I went to her on the fourth day of her illness, and, as she had many times when in health received paras from me in charity, I called her to me from the hut in which she was, with her father, mother, two brothers and sister, her mother and brother being as ill as herself. She tottered out, and presented a most aggravated example of affliction by the hand of the Almighty. She had a carbuncle, which occupied the right corner of her mouth, another over the jugular vein, and a third on her right instep, which made her hobble in her gait; and, added to all this, she stood under a burning sun of perhaps 130° Fahrenheit, parched with fever, whilst her head, she said, ran round, her limbs failed her, and, as she expressed it, she wished to eat, but could not. Her mother told me she had been delirious all the preceding night; and the husband added that his wife was suffering herself from two femoral swellings.

It will be recollected that, when the plague showed

oils, and perfumes, which are probably all of them worse than nothing."—*Quarterly Review*, No 54, for Oct. 1822, p. 527.

The names in Arabic for the plague are webá, the plague; cubbeh, a cupola, as marking the shape of the swelling; (Koubeh and weba, or vebi, are terms now used to designate the plague.—*Brown's Travels;*) also el derebeh el tâaûn, which was the term most in use; el fená.

itself, the peasants were busied in the feeding of silk-worms preparatory to their spinning; and that, when they were driven out of the village, they did not, on that account, abandon their worms. The family of Constantine, even in the midst of their calamities, made a hut near their cave, and fed and nourished the worms as usual, from their own mulberry trees, which were close by.[1]

Up to the first of June, there were every day fresh cases, after which they suddenly ceased; and, with the exception of a few deaths of those who had fallen ill in May, the daily reports were more consolatory.

Lady Hester's fears were by this time somewhat abated, and I again re-entered the convent, from which I had now been excluded since the beginning of May.

[1] Sir James Porter, in his *Letters from the Levant*, speaking of the importation of silk during the time of plague (page 446), says: "We may safely affirm that the plague scarce ever rages in those parts of the country where silk is—namely, at and about Antioch, at Tripoli, and Latakia. An accident may indeed appear once in fifteen or twenty years." Is it possible that an ambassador, residing in the capital of the empire, and enabled by his situation to procure every kind of information he might desire, should yet have taken up with notions so diametrically opposite to the truth! although it must be confessed, that those who can afford it do build themselves huts of canes and branches of trees, in which they rear their worms; and the reason of this is, that the smells arising from cooking, and other offensive odours, may not, as was the case in my fumigation, kill the worms.

If there were anything capable of relieving the irksomeness of such a confinement as that which we now suffered, it was the lively interest excited in us by the events which had recently occurred in Europe. On the 12th of June, the news of Buonaparte's exile to the island of Elba reached the monastery, and extinguished, as it was then thought, the prodigious splendour of his career. It was remarkable that the first account of this decision of the belligerent sovereigns was communicated to us, not from our consuls on the sea-coast, but from Dayr el Kamar, through a priest of the country, who had received his information from his correspondent at Rome; and there were many circumstances which occurred, demonstrating that these Eastern countries maintained a constant and sure correspondence with the western world, and were early informed of the changes in it. The common people did not fail to picture the downfall of a usurper in the colouring borrowed from their own customs, and he was said to have been carried about Paris in an iron cage, like Bajazet.

On the 14th of June, arrived in the port of Sayda H.M. sloop of war the Kite, commanded by Captain T. Forster, who came up to the convent, and had a long and private conversation with Lady Hester. He almost immediately sailed again to the south, and on the 22nd returned.

It appeared afterwards that her ladyship had required the assistance of a ship of war from Sir Robert

Liston, to be enabled to ascertain the state of the ruins of Ascalon, preparatory to certain excavations proposed to be there made, by authority from the Porte, in search of hidden treasures; and that Sir Robert Liston had despatched Captain Forster with orders to act according to Lady Hester's instructions. When Captain Forster quitted Sayda the first time, he went thither, reconnoitred the shore, and found it unfit for landing.

Although there was no wind, whilst moored behind the reef of rocks, which forms the haven of Sayda, the sloop rolled her gunwales under water. The presence of Captain Forster and the officers of the Kite was a source of enjoyment scarcely to be conceived by those who have not, like us, suffered for so long a period a total privation of the society of their countrymen. After stopping a week, they left us. On the 20th of June, a slight shock of an earthquake was felt.

On St. John's day, the 24th of June, the Franks of Sayda opened their houses, and no fresh cases of plague happened afterwards. From a list of deaths, kept by M. Bertrand, to whom the whole population of the place was known, it appeared that 360 persons had fallen victims to it. How little are those reports, inserted in the European journals, to be relied on, by which a city, like Cairo or Damascus, is made to lose 2000 or 3000 a day; so that, in one month, in which the virulence of the disease is at the highest, the total loss would amount to more than the total population. It would be a fair average to reckon, in a most severe

plague, the proportion of deaths at one to one thousand inhabitants per day. Thus, in Malta, the maximum was sixty a day: and 60,000 may be calculated as the population of La Valetta. So, for Sayda, where the maximum was eleven a day, the same ratio would perhaps hold just. In Abra, twenty persons died in forty days, and the number of families being forty, with five persons belonging to each family, gives a population of two hundred.

My servant had obtained permission to go to the shrine of St. Haneh, (St. Joan) at the village of Kurka, on the 6th of July, to celebrate the festival of that saint. A small church stood there to her honour, on the side of a mountain, commanding a fine view of the wild and romantic scenery through which the river Ewely runs. A crowd of people annually assembles on this day from Sayda, and from the neighbouring villages. They go, on the vigil of the saint's day, and, mixing together promiscuously, pass the night in the open air round the walls of the chapel. Many cures are attributed to the leaves of an oak tree, which overshadows the chapel, and to the water of a spring which trickles from the rock beneath the altar within it. Setting aside any supposed medicinal virtues in trees and stones, the place may no doubt be very healthy. I rode to the spot, and saw a motley assemblage of Christians. Two Mahometans were likewise there, induced, from the reported miracles of the place, to try them in their own cases, being sorely afflicted

with chronic diseases. These pilgrimages to Christian shrines by Mahometans are not unusual, and bring no scandal on the pilgrim.

July the 9th, Lady Hester was seized with the prickly heat. This is a miliary eruption, alternately disappearing and returning, which excites the most intolerable itching. The heat oppressed her so much that I thought it advisable to remove her to a cool situation on some elevated part of the mountain. Pierre, who had been recalled since Captain Forster's arrival, had mentioned a house above Beyrout as extremely commodious and airy; upon which he had been immediately despatched to request it of the emir. The emir returned for answer that the house in question was inhabited by a branch of his own family, whom he could not turn out. Meshmûshy, a village upon a very high part of the mountain, enjoying a fine air and excellent water, distant about five hours' journey from the monastery, was then fixed on, and a second application was made.

On the 20th of July, an answer arrived from the Emir Beshýr to Lady Hester's application for the house at Meshmûshy. He did not say positively she could not have it: his expressions were equivocal and shuffling; but, as she could not bear the least appearance of opposition to her will, or a show of disrespect, she wrote back, in very strong terms, that, "whether he gave her a house or not, she should set off next day, and would pitch her tents on the mountain, if she found nothing better."

Accordingly, on the 25th, we set off: Lady Hester rode on an ass, which the emir had given her some time before. In order to enjoy the fine scenery of Mount Lebanon, the journey was divided into four days. The first day, passing Salhyah, a clean village, we went no farther than Ayn el Hager, a spring of water distant one league from the convent, where the tents were fixed. The second day we reached Libâ, a village of Christians and Metoualis, which is about three miles farther. Libâ is a village of forty-four houses. The shaykh, or bailiff, was a Drûze named Sumyn. The weather was so hot that I would not have my tent up, and slept under some fig-trees upon a small carpet. A fat little man, who was the curate, amused me much by his curiosity and talkativeness. The third day brought us to Isfarýn, a hamlet celebrated for its tobacco. The next morning, we passed Iktâny, and on the 4th, encamped at Bisra, close to Ayn Bisra,[1] a small spring of excellent water. On the 28th, we ascended half way the steep mountain on which Meshmûshy stands, and on the 29th, in the morning, arrived there.

The situation of Meshmûshy is commanding and romantic. The house was small; it was, therefore, resolved to get rid of all unnecessary servants. Lady Hester's maid had been left behind at Mar Elias:

[1] Ayn means spring, and Ayn Bisra means Bisra spring. Who would think that Maundrell contrives, out of these two words, to make *Ambuslee*, which he gives as the name of the village?

Pierre was dismissed: there remained only a mountain lass, who understood nothing but Arabic; Um Risk, an old woman, who was in the same predicament; and an out-door man, named Ayd. Ten weeks were passed in this retirement; and Lady Hester several times said that she never had been more comfortable since she left Malta than she was then.



MESHMUSHY.

Meshmûshy is a hamlet of twelve or fourteen families,[1] situate nearly at the summit of a mountain,

[1] These families are all descendants of four brothers, who fixed their residence here about a century ago, promising to till the neighbouring slopes, upon condition of being exempted from

forming, as it were, the promontory of a chain: so that, towards the valley of Bisra, it is almost perpendicular, making a very difficult ascent. The air is good; but fogs every evening were seen to hang on the summit and around us, giving an excessive chilliness to the atmosphere. Dysenteries and hooping-coughs were prevalent at our first coming.

I have endeavoured to give a representation of the costume of the natives of this village, which will serve for that of all the Maronite population.

Of the two figures, that on the left was the chief of the village of Meshmûshy. His companion was a less considerable person; but still was a sort of squire, as he kept a horse, which is the test of gentility throughout Syria. Yellow shawls are very much worn by the Christians of respectability. The blue striped close abah of the other figure is affected chiefly by the Drûzes themselves, who use much simplicity in their garment, and mostly dress alike. All such as are above the level of labouring peasants carry khanjàrs, or daggers, in their girdles.

The long red skull cap (tarbûsh), seen pending from the head of the right hand figure, was at this

all taxes. The head of the family, named Jahjáh Abu Yusef, and who had given up his house for us, pretended that he still retained the firman, or grant, although the emirs of the Drûzes had encroached on the privileges granted by it. Hence they were now compelled to pay the miri, or tax for sown land; but their houses were still free from land-tax

time peculiar to Syria, and more especially to Mount Lebanon. In the towns and cities it is only partially worn.



COSTUME OF THE DRUZES.

About five hundred yards from the hamlet, and on the same level, was a large monastery of Maronite friars, called Dayr el Sayda, peopled with seventy or eighty monks and lay brothers. As their rules never allowed them to eat meat, their whole maintenance consisted of cheese, milk, leben, (curds and whey), dibs, (grape-juice concentrated) and vegetables. They were, for the most part, very ignorant; but there were two who were ingenious as artificers,[1] and two or three who passed among them for scholars; their scholarship consisting in being able to read Syriac, (in which the service of their church is performed) in Syriac characters; whilst the greatest number read Syriac in

[1] I bought of one, for three shillings, a powder-horn, made with his own hand.

Arabic characters, into which it is transferred for the use of the uninformed. These two friars spoke a little Syriac likewise. They had a painter among them, who would not have ranked higher than a dauber in any other country. Their chapel was considered as one of the finest on the mountain. The building was of rough stones, found on the spot: their cells had nothing superfluous in them, having only a raised bench on one side, on which was a mattress, and upon it a wadded coverlet; sheets being considered as unnecessary luxuries. The windows had no casements nor shutters; and, when the elevation of the spot is considered, and that snow falls frequently, they must have suffered much from the cold. Women were not admitted within the monastery; but, by an evasion of an easy nature, there was a small chapel, separated by a wall, through which was a door from the monastery into it, where the women heard mass, prayed, and confessed.

The Maronites are not found more to the south than Meshmûshy. Maronites and their monasteries abound most in the northern districts of the mountain. They distinguish themselves by the name of belledýah (indigenous,) from those of Aleppo, who are called Aleppine Maronites. The Maronites are of the order of St. Anthony, the Egyptian.

A great deal of tobacco was cultivated at Meshmûshy, and with great success. This sort, when lighted, sparkles and hisses slightly, as if impregnated

with saltpetre, which salt, in fact, gave it that property, and is derived from the goats' dung, with which the ground is manured.

There were many fine springs at Meshmûshy, the water of which was delicious and cool; but not in sufficient quantity for the purposes of irrigation.

On the very pinnacle of the mountain is a small level of an acre's breadth. Here was the tomb of Nebby Meshwah, covered with a small cupola, which could be seen at a great many miles' distance. This tomb was held in reverence by Moslems and Drûzes. It was surrounded by old oak trees, less large, however, than the English oak. Below Meshmûshy was a Turkish village, called Benywaty. Some one of these villages kept the sepulchre clean, and lighted a lamp in it every night.

One day, whilst standing at the gateway of the house, I observed several peasants in succession pass by with pieces of meat, on wooden skewers, in their hands. I asked them what meat it was, and they told me camel's flesh, upon which I bought a piece of about half a pound from one of them, and ordered it to be dressed. The cook turned up her nose, and expressed much wonder at my taste, by which I understood that camels' flesh was no dainty in her eyes; and, although many travellers have affirmed that it is considered so in the Desert by the Bedouins, yet I never saw any eaten there but once. The peasants whom I spoke to were inhabitants of the village of Benywaty, and Mahome-

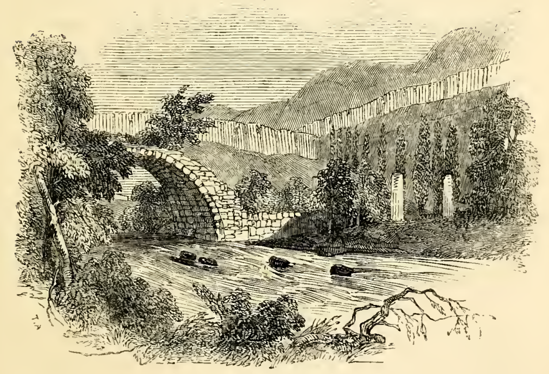
tans. The Christians pretended to hold the camels' flesh as unclean; but whether because their priests told them so, or because they love to do contrary to what Mahometans practise, which is a common motive with them for many of their actions, I could not learn.

Ayd, the man-servant, was dismissed, without his wages, on the 19th, for refusing to go a journey on foot to fetch articles wanted for the house. He betook himself to Dayr el Kamar, and complained to the emir; upon which the dragoman, M. Beaudin, was summoned to Bteddýn, the emir's residence, to answer the charge, and I accompanied him. In the afternoon of the 20th, we descended the north-east side of the mountain into the valley of Bisra. The side of the mountain was covered with aromatic herbs, especially lavender. Half way down, there is a small river, which, rushing over a precipice at Gezýn, a village about one mile to the right, in a cascade of a single sheet of water, tumbles from rock to rock through a deep descending glen, until it reaches the vale of Bisra, and joins the river Ewely. This glen is overtopped, to the south, facing Meshmûshy, by a chain of lofty precipitous rocks, upon which were seen the ruins of an old castle, rendered memorable by the stout resistance which Fakhr ed Dyn,[1] emir of the Drûzes, made in it to the forces

[1] Fakhr-ed-dyn flourished in the reign of Sultan Murad. He was fourth emir of the Drûzes. In March, 1816, I visited this castle, in company with Mr. W. Bankes.

of the sultan for the space of seven years. At our feet was a small bridge crossing the torrent, and close to it a water-mill, to grind the corn of the neighbouring villages. Leaving this on the right hand, and below us, and, inclining to the left, we descended into the vale, which we traversed.

About one mile from the foot of the mountain, we crossed a small stream which sometimes becomes a torrent, on a single arched bridge, made in steps, close to which, four granite pillars were still standing, the remains of some ancient building. This bridge was called Geser Behannýn.



GESER BEHANNYN.

Close below the bridge, the stream emptied itself into the river Ewely, which we forded. The

scenery hereabout is magnificent. This spot answers to the situation assigned by Abulfeda to a city, called Mashgara; but the inhabitants have a tradition that these pillars are the remains of the edifice which Sampson pulled down on the heads of the Philistines.

We mounted against the course of the stream for about an hour; and then, turning short to the left, ascended a path cut in a rock almost perpendicular, which was the steepest road I had ever seen for four-footed animals. On the top, we found ourselves on a spacious and almost level ridge of the mountains; and, passing through some fine olive plantations, we arrived at nightfall at the village of Muzrât el Shûf, whose inhabitants are Drûzes and Christians. We repaired to the centre of the village, where was a square plot of ground shaded by a noble tree, under whose branches was a stone platform, where we spread our carpets, having tied up our asses close to us. We had some difficulty in getting a little bread and treacle, with a small dish of eggs fried in oil, for supper; after which we slept under the tree.

On the following morning we pursued our journey, and for an hour or two travelled over a most stony soil upon a tolerably level path, until we reached Bteddýn, the emir's residence. He was from home, being gone to superintend the construction of an aqueduct to bring water from a distance of several miles, to his palace: for the Orientals think no house or

place enviable that has not running water in it, or near it. We tied up our asses, and spread our carpets under some olive trees, and then presented ourselves at the door, saying who we were. Orders were immediately given for providing us with a room in the palace, and we were conducted to the emir's sons, Khalyl and Emyn Casem, who received us with much politeness. The elder had on a quilted robe like a bedgown; the younger a white ermine pelisse covered with white satin. No Englishman appeared at this place, without being questioned on the health of Sir Sydney Smith, and they asked if Mr. B., whom they had seen in our former journey, was royally born.

M. Beaudin went to seek the emir, and I remained and breakfasted with Selûm, the chief katib of the emir, reputed to be a very shrewd old man, but fat and bloated, and looking like a glutton; and, indeed, he ate and drank like one. With him was a priest, named Abûna Shâby, exercising the profession of physician, and now in attendance on the emir, by whom he was said to be pensioned. As usual with such persons, they questioned me on many strange things, but generally with some object in view, either for their own or for their employer's purposes.

As M. Beaudin did not come back when I expected him, at 11 o'clock I mounted my ass to return home alone. I lost my way, and, but for the civility of a Drûze gentleman, who found me wandering among the

mountains, and who set me right, himself conducting me for a whole league, I might have been exposed to danger; although I began now to look upon travelling in these countries as perfectly secure, and to see no reason to doubt my safety in Mahometan lands any more than I did in Christendom.

I passed the village of Ayn Bàt, consisting of Drûzes and Christians; and, proceeding down a deep valley, through which was the bed of a torrent now dry, I arrived at the village of Guffûra (or some such name) then at Zahûr, where I descended into the vale of Bisra by a steep path, and came to a hamlet called Mûsa kellem allah. I crossed the river, ascended the opposite mountain: and, after seven hours' riding, reached Meshmûshy. M. Beaudin returned the following day, and Ayd was sent by the emir to beg her ladyship's pardon.

The 26th of August, I rode down to Abra. It happened that, on the 28th, three weddings were to be celebrated in the village, and I took the opportunity of being present at them. The parties were peasants. The weddings lasted two days. On the first evening the bridegrooms, dressed in their best clothes, with daggers in their girdles, and with other marks of finery, which native Christian peasants are commonly forbidden to wear, seated themselves on the bare ground, in an open place in the middle of the village. The villagers were assembled around them. Each, as

he entered the circle, saluted the bridegrooms, and invoked a blessing upon them; whilst they rose up and returned the compliment. With this exception, they were obliged to remain quiet, preserving a very sober and grave demeanour. The party smoked their pipes, each person from his own tobacco-bag. A pipe and tabor, with a long drum, kept up incessantly a noisy music, discordant to me, but very pleasing to the people of the country. In the middle of the ring, those who chose stood up, one by one, and danced a slow dance. A few of the young men danced in couples, with swords in their hands, and acted a sham combat. To these succeeded hired dancers, the buffooneries of a Jack-pudding, a man dressed in woman's clothes, and some other mummery. These diversions were kept up until a late hour.

In the mean time, the brides, each in her separate cottage, were seated on a mat or carpet, closely veiled, and preserving unbroken silence. As a doctor, I was permitted to enter the rooms where they were. I found the first, a girl of twelve or thirteen, in a long white veil, with a crowd of women round her. To gratify me, as a stranger, they bade her show herself a little. She was dressed in a silk kombâz or gown. Round her arms and legs she had bracelets; gold ornaments encircled her neck; and pieces of tinsel were stuck on her dress here and there. Her look was downcast, and she was not permitted to utter more than a single salutation, almost in a whisper. I found the other

eating her supper: both looked very like the women that go about with morris-dancers or chimney-sweepers, on May-day. Although I knew the girl by sight extremely well, yet now she was obliged to use the same reserve as if she had never set eyes on me. The women also had a pipe and tabor, and dancing boys, with castanets, to amuse them.

Thus the first evening passed. On the second day the ceremony of visiting continued. In the evening, the parties went to church. The priest performed the marriage ceremony, which I did not see. They then were led, bride and bridegroom, in procession to their houses. Here it was optional whether they would retire and consummate the marriage, or join the company, where music and dancing still went on as before, with the firing of small arms; for the lower classes in Turkey never feel their joy complete, unless a great deal of powder is wasted. As one of the bridegrooms, who was to marry the maid of fifteen, was himself not thirteen, he seemed disposed to enjoy the music a little longer. He was the son of that Constantine who died of the plague. His brother, twenty years old, had been betrothed to Mariam, the bride; but, he dying, it devolved on the next brother, according to the usage of the mountain, to espouse her. Hence the disparity of years on the wrong side.[1]

[1] I believe there was an Athenian law of the same nature, on which the incidents of one of Terence's comedies are founded.

The other bridegroom was a fine young man, and retired immediately.

When the evening was far advanced, the drummer went round to collect his presents. Each person dealt out small money piece by piece, naming to each piece, as he gave it, a toast. The drummer then bawled out the toast, with the name of him who proposed it, and the number of paras he had received for it, and an eulogium on the person in honour of whose name the gift was made. During the whole of the ceremony, the loo loo of the women was incessant.

Persons before marriage are affianced, and this ceremony precedes the wedding sometimes a year, sometimes several, more or less. Thus, I was once present, when Rufka bint Yusef Kobryn was affianced to Michael, the mason of Medjdelëûn; and it was done in the following way. The curate of the village came to Rufka's father's house at sunset, and Rufka was desired to go out to one of her neighbour's. The young mason came with his friends, and the curate said a prayer over him. He gave to the father, as a present for Rufka, two handkerchiefs, a pair of red shoes, one white veil of English muslin, nine rubbias. (about £1) all which was to be forfeited if he refused afterwards to marry her. Brandy was then introduced; pipes were lighted; singing took place; and all the party vociferated, in set phrases in rhyme, long life and happiness to the future bride and bridegroom.

Generally the bridegroom's friends go to fetch the

bride on a mare in fantastic housings. When she enters the village of the bridegroom, he receives her with a gentle tap on the head with his pipe, his hand, or something, whilst she bows submissively in token of future obedience to his will. At a second marriage, which I witnessed at Salhiyah, one mile from the Convent, the young men, his companions, conducted the bridegroom on horseback to the village of the bride, they being on foot, singing in turns with the women who followed in the rear. The song of the men was more like hallooing than music. The women always finished with a loo loo.

This son of Constantine, of whose marriage we have just been speaking, supposed that his father had concealed a considerable sum of money somewhere in or about his cottage: and, in conjunction with his sisters, he hired a Moor from Sayda to show the spot. I have already said how great the reputation of the Moors, or men of the West (Mogrebyns) is, as fortune-tellers, discoverers of stolen goods, and conjurors. The Moor, when brought to the cottage, read certain forms of charms, during which, the bystanders, two women, the lad, and three other peasants, relations of the deceased, fancied they heard the voices of spirits under ground. The Moor pretended to address them in these words—"Show me the treasure—show me the treasure." "We will," answered the spirits; "but first fumigate us." The Moor then pretended that spirits would not be

contented with common incense, and demanded three *metcals* of ambergris, or money to buy it. Ambergris is nearly a crown a metcal. The poor peasants declared they had not so much money in the world; the Moor said he could not go on with the incantation without it, and went away with a few piasters he had first obtained as earnest money.

This man, as being at hand, was employed by the côoly or bailiff of the village, one Nassr Allah, to find a purse of money which he had lost. The Moor promised to do it, if Nassr Allah would give him forty paras. "So I will," said Nassr Allah, "if you will first tell me what sum was in the purse lost." The Moor would not venture upon this, happening to have no clue. The parties, therefore, were at issue; and here the matter ended.

When this anecdote was related to me, I was led to inquire what the nature of inheritance was in the village. I was told that Constantine's son would take equal to the two daughters; and, if there had been no surviving son, then the male first cousin or cousins take equal to the two daughters. This law of inheritance is founded on the maxim that females pay no miri.

Giorgio, the young Greek who was hired at Constantinople, had departed, it will be recollected, with Mr. B., from Latakia, in November of last year, and had obtained permission before returning, to go to his native place, the island of Syra, to see his friends. He returned the 25th of September. At Constan-

tinople, he had purchased several curious articles of dress for Lady Hester. And indeed the monastery, by little and little, became almost too small to contain her collection of costumes, in which were many things whereof any one, opportunely worn in England by a lady of fashion, would have created both admiration and jealousy among the fair sex.

Her ladyship now began collecting fresh people about her, intending to make a journey to the ruins of Heliopolis, or, as it is called, Bâlbec. Pierre had sent for a young woman from Acre, whom he recommended as a useful servant. Her name was Werdy (Rose.) [1]

There is an occupation unknown in England, but

[1] Service in Syria is the last resource of the wretched, but not all kinds of service; for that of a great family is often considered as very desirable for youth of both sexes. There was also a peasant lad hired, named Elias, concerning whom I learned the following anecdote. His mother, when in child-birth, fearing her situation to be dangerous, had made a vow to St. Athanasius on the Mountain, that, if she survived, not a razor should touch the head of her offspring until she had made a pilgrimage to his shrine, distant about five days' journey from Meshmûshy, where she lived. Poverty prevented her from fulfilling her vow; and the boy arrived at the age of 7 or 8 years, a period at which it is considered as disgraceful not to have the head shaved: for it is the custom in the East at that age to leave only a small lock on the forehead, in the same way as the head of old Time is represented by painters. So, to get over the difficulty, she made use of scissors, affirming that she had sacredly kept her vow; for scissors were not a razor. "Avec le ciel il-y-a des accommodements."

which employs a great many persons in Syria, where no such things as letter-mails exist: it is that of foot-messenger to carry letters. These foot-messengers will, for a stated sum, half generally paid in advance, and half on their return with an answer, go to any distance. They travel with a good thick stick, light trowsers and a jacket, bare-legged, and sometimes without shoes. Their food on the road is often bread and water only, sometimes with the addition of fruit, if in seasou, or of leben, if to be had. They thus escape being plundered by carrying nothing to excite cupidity; for a simple letter is not an object to tempt robbers.

I have said above that the village of Meshmûshy was surrounded with vineyards. The grapes ripened under our eye, and we could eat to satiety: so could the meanest peasant; and in this respect it must be allowed that the lot of the poor in hot climates is preferable to that of the like class of people in cold ones. I counted no fewer than twenty-one sorts of grapes.

The vineyards at Meshmûshy, and elsewhere on the mountain, were planted in rows; and the inequality of the ground, from the preference that was always given to the sides of the hills, rendered it necessary to support the soil at the foot of each row by a stone wall; and thus a vineyard became a succession of steps or terraces, rising one above another. The vines were planted among the stones of the walls, which were not

cemented.[1] They were carefully manured and pruned every year.

Great quantities of wine were annually made at the monastery of Meshmûshy by the monks; and, as the vintage happened this year whilst we were there, I had an opportunity of being present at it. They exposed the grapes, principally white ones, and for the most part of a small white sort called *muksaysy*, seven or eight days to the sun, with the stalks of the bunches turned upwards; as, the more the stalks are dried, the better is the juice. At the end of eight days they squeezed out the juice, by the naked feet, in a basket, through the bottom of which it ran, or sometimes on a stone pavement on an inclined plane, into a receiver, which is either a pan, or oftentimes a hole sunk in the pavement. Those, who wished to have a dry wine, put the juice, thus expressed, into large earthenware jars, which hold from 9 to 18 gallons or more, where it remained to ferment. At the end of forty days the mouth of the jar was covered with a board fitted to it, which was carefully luted round the edges. When wanted for drinking, which is generally within the year, or, at the most, within two years, the luting is broken, the lid taken off, and a portion every day laded out for use.[2] Those who are desirous of

[1] The appearance of vineyards in Syria and in the Pays de Vaud in Switzerland is precisely alike. The manner of cultivation likewise seemed to be the same.

[2] For lading, a calabash is generally used, which is a species

having a sweet wine, put the juice on the fire in a cauldron, and heat it short of boiling, until a scum forms on the surface, which they take off. They then put it in the same kind of jars for fermentation.

It was impossible, on seeing wine made, not to be shocked at the dirtiness of the process, particularly in what regards the feet of the persons who tread it, generally peasants. Were it done by Mahometans, even of the lowest class, there would be nothing offensive in it; because they use so many ablutions, that they are as clean in their feet as their hands. But the Christians of the East partake with the poor of European countries in the filth of their lower extremities.

This was indeed a busy season of the year for the mountaineers. At the same time with the wine was made likewise *dibs*, called in French raisinée, which in taste and appearance resembled treacle, and formed an important article of food throughout Syria, more especially among the middle and lower classes. On a pavement, either of stone or hewn out of the rock, and on an inclined plane, surrounded by a ledge about a foot high, vast heaps of grapes are thrown. These are trodden by men with their naked feet, and the juice runs off through one or more scupper-holes, perforated in the ledge, into pits or cisterns. These pits are square, four or five feet deep, and plastered on the

of pumpkin, which, when dried, has had its pulp and seeds scooped out, and becomes fit for the purposes of a ladle.

inside so as not to leak. The husks of the grapes, thus trodden, are afterwards submitted to a second operation. They are raked together in a heap, and, being covered with a broad stone, a rude press is contrived by means of a large trunk of a tree, one end of which is thrust into a hole in the wall (raised for this purpose at the back of the pavement), whilst to the other is fastened a heavy block of stone: and the trunk or beam, being let down on the broad flag-stone, acts as a powerful lever. The pressure, continued thus for some time, forces out what juice remains; and the process is completed by one or two washings, which they give to the husks, by means of water poured upon them.[1] The juice, first being allowed to settle, is laded from the pits into a large copper cauldron, placed over a furnace. It is there boiled very quickly; and the scum, which rises abundantly, is taken off by a man whose business this is, whilst the watery parts of the juice are carried off in vapour. In a few hours the whole assumes a brownish yellow colour, and, after a farther continuance of the boiling, becomes of the consistence of oil or liquid honey, when it is put into the receiver, where it cools, and is carried off to the houses in jars.

To these operations succeeded another, less laborious, which was the curing of raisins. Such grapes as were

[1] Three quintals of grapes are necessary to make one quintal of dibs, which sells at one pound per quintal.—*Burckhardt*, p. 156.

considered most fit for the purpose were gathered when quite ripe: these were the *muksaysy* for the small yellow raisins, and the *cury* for the black raisin. A spot of ground was swept clean, and the grapes were spread out in the sun, but were dipped previously in a mixture of ley with a little soap and oil. On the second, third, and fourth days of exposure, they were sprinkled (by means of a rod made of the herb *tyûn*) with the same ley, but not soaked. After this they were suffered to lie night and day until the drying was completed. This was the manner generally practised on Mount Lebanon, and was performed by the wives of the peasants; whilst the men made the wine dibs.

In the first days of November comes on the olive harvest. The first part of the harvest consisted in collecting the windfalls. From these olives an inferior oil was pressed. Then a second crop was beaten down [1] from the trees with long sticks, and carried to the mills. It was a pleasing sight, early in the morning, to see a whole village deserted: men, women, and children, hastening with their asses and baskets of provisions to pass the day in their olive grounds; although the year was far advanced, and the weather, especially in elevated situations like Meshmûshy, by no means warm.

[1] "When thou beatest thine olive trees, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow."

With respect to olive grounds, some have trees of their own: others hire, at a given sum, so many trees, and take their chance in the harvest. That oil is best which is made by the process of boiling the olives, when the oil separates and floats on the surface, and is skimmed off by the hands.

The oil was pressed out in the following manner. The olives, collected as we have above described, were thrown into a cylindrical hole, called the tanûr, where the olives were completely smashed; certain iron crosses were turned round rapidly by means of a water-wheel, whilst a man, seated by the tanûr, with his hand dexterously introduced between two arms of the cross, was continually employed in drawing out the pounded olives. So prepared, this paste was put into the hollow of a straw bowl, roughly braided into shape, until fifteen or twenty bowls were filled. There was prepared a trunk of a tree (for the whole apparatus is rough,) hollowed out like a tube, whose bore was exactly the size of the straw bowls, but whose circumference was incomplete, so much being left as was necessary for a lever to pass up and down. One end of the lever had a piston, whilst the other was fixed, and to the intermediate part a vast stone was suspended. The piston end being unpinned, and let down on the pile of straw bowls, these were compressed, and the oil oozing out, was received into the cistern below. Thus, in twenty-four hours, a hundred weight of oil may be obtained.

Nor did the fig harvest cause less bustle. Figs were gathered in the morning, and laid to dry in the sun on stalks of *shumar* and *fekua*, plants like tansy. Each parcel required to be exposed five or six days, and was then heaped into the general lump on the terrace, on the house-top, where they were accumulated until the whole crop had been dried. The women then boiled *zata* (pennyroyal), *shûmar* (tansy), and *gaut* or *gat*, and dipped the figs in the decoction, after which they were again exposed to the sun ; and, when dry, were put into jars of sunburnt clay, where they were kept for use.

In some journeys, which I made backward and forward from Meshmûshy to Abra, I had an opportunity of observing more attentively the valleys through which I passed, and the soil of the country. From Abra to Salhiah the road is level, the soil white and unproductive. Salhiah had fifty houses, and a parish priest, who is also a weaver. Three steep hills bring you to Ayn el Hager, opposite to which is the village of Keffergerra, upon a hill. After a level of a mile you reach Libbâ, when the road descends with considerable steepness into a valley, where is a trickling rivulet, and a fountain with a basin for cattle to drink out of. By a very steep ascent you come to Kefferfelûs, a village of twenty-five houses, standing in the midst of a grove of olive and fig-trees. From the left of the road you look down into a deep valley, descending into which the colour of the soil changes from

white to red. Ascending through a low wood, by a path peculiarly difficult, you come to Isfaryn, a hamlet of thirty houses without water. Here much tobacco is grown, of a very superior quality, and greatly sought after at Acre, Sayda, and Beyrout.

The road winds round to the left, through a wood of arbutus, turpentine-trees, shumac, stunted oaks, &c., when, on a sudden, it comes directly on the edge of a precipice, down which, to a considerable depth beneath, you look on the river Ewely, here rushing over a rocky bed in noisy and foaming cascades. Across the valley, on the opposite mountain, are seen, in addition to the natural scenery, the three large white convents, Dayr Mkhallas, Dayr el Benât, and Dayr Saida, distant a mile or two from each other. Of Dayr Mkhallas some mention has been made. Dayr el Benat is a convent for women, of which there are two more on Mount Lebanon. The nuns are generally taken from the lowest classes. They lead a laborious life, and, when not busied in their sacred duties, are employed in spinning, weaving, trimming vines, and the most menial occupations.

The road takes a direction, on a descent, to a level with the river. Half way down is Iktâly, a hamlet perched on a projecting rock. To the left of it is Musrat el Tahûn, also a hamlet. Here, upon three or four different occasions tempted by the beauty of the view, we pitched our tents, until it was discovered that the miller, who owned the spot, had made a clan-

destine use of Lady Hester's name to obtain favours from the Pasha of Acre, when she abandoned him. The rocks hereabout, which are black and bare, look as if they had just emerged from the deluge.

The scenery, which succeeds to Musrat el Tahûn, is beautiful, when, quitting the mountain, you traverse the vale of Bisra. The village on the side of the vale is a striking feature in it, being built in ascending terraces, which diminish as they rise, and are crowned by a church. About half way through the vale there is a path by which the mountain whereon Meshmûshy stands is to be ascended. Few places, which are at all accessible to beasts of burden, can be more rugged and steep than this. About half-way up begins a forest of firs, which bear cones or apples, from which excellent kernels are extracted, and much used in pastry and confectionary. They are called, in Arabic, *snobar*. For the first quarter of an hour the appearance of the mountain is so wild that one scarcely believes it possible to find habitations higher up. You are however agreeably undeceived, when, quitting the forest of firs, you come upon a small hamlet beset with vineyards, tobacco fields, fig and walnut-trees. You now see above you the monastery with its steeple, and your ears perhaps are saluted with the tolling of a bell, always a pleasing sound among rocks and woods. One quarter of an hour more brings you to a second flat, where stands the monastery: and some friars were generally seen basking in the sun, and, for a

moment, forgetting their listless habits to stare at the passing traveller, whose business they often unceremoniously inquired into, as necessarily connected with nobody but themselves in this retired spot. A level path through highly cultivated mulberry grounds, and occasionally under large shady walnut-trees, leads to the hamlet of Meshmûshy; where, close by the fountain, stood the house we lived in, so deeply shaded by plane and walnut-trees that the weary pedlar or tired peasant was invited to rest his limbs and to drink of the refreshing stream.

END OF VOL. II.

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